

Death, Zombies and Resurrection

Second Edition

*I dedicate this book to those who are not afraid to defy death, to those who are
alive and who wish to live forever.*



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Preface to the Second Edition

This second edition is not simply a reprint but an attempt to bring order to material that in the first version was scattered across many chapters, myths, and personal recollections. Since that first edition it has become clearer that three themes which seemed separate from one another --- reflections on the body and soul, the history of power and predation, and the theme of 'werewolves' among us --- in fact form a single vision.

And so in the second edition the book is divided into three parts. Part One --- 'The Mechanics of Soul and Body' --- brings together everything that concerns the physical and spiritual make-up of the human being: from the myth of Oya and the Stone Age to the theory of the central tendon of the diaphragm and proposals for a new system of personal identification. Part Two --- 'The History of Power and Predation' --- traces how the fear of death has been used by rulers for millennia to control the people, from Cain and Abel to Genghis Khan and the genocides of the modern era. Part Three --- 'Metamorphoses and Pretence' --- shifts the register: the myth of werewolves becomes a metaphor for people with a 'wolf soul' who live among us, disguising themselves as ordinary people, and the personal story told in this part shows that this metaphor is not so far from reality.

The chapters within each part are largely preserved in the form in which they were written for the first edition: what mattered was not to rewrite what had already been said, but to arrange it in a clearer order and, in places, to complete what had previously been left scattered. An appendix with formulas and tables has been added at the end of the book.

I do not claim to provide a definitive answer to the questions I raise. This book is an invitation to think alongside me rather than a textbook.

Part I. The Mechanics of Soul and Body

The first part of the book is devoted to the body and soul --- to what connects ancient myths of death and resurrection with modern attempts to understand where exactly in the human being that which makes us ourselves is located. Gathered here are reflections on death and zombies, on pain and pleasure, on the legal definition of death, and on the history of humanity through the prism of the fear of life's end. Also here is what is perhaps the most personal of my hypotheses: that the soul resides not in the heart and not in the brain, but in the central tendon of the diaphragm, and that a new and more honest system of human identification could be built not on a name and date of birth but on biology and the psyche.

Black Magic of the Stone Age

No one knows how long ago it happened. No one knows how true this story is... Or perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a legend... A myth --- for this tale concerned an extraordinary being.

Her name was Oya.

Oya was many things. But above all, she was a mighty warrior and the goddess of the River Niger. Some called her the Keeper of the Gate. As is common with tales of mystical beings, different stories were told about her.

Some whispered how she waited for the souls of the dead and guided them toward their next rebirth. They believed that their Oya was a representative of life, not death, and their faith in her was inseparable from their belief in reincarnation. Others, however, whispered far darker stories --- that she was in truth a witch who had once killed a goddess; the fatal blow had been struck with a small stone to the head. In those days, stones were the weapons of long wars. Their very own Oya was a soul-catcher. Such stories made one wonder which parts the people actually knew to be true, and which parts they simply wished to believe.

Another version of these dark legends told of Oya and her precious sarcophagus, into which she sealed souls together with various belongings. Fragments of the soul were kept in the darkness and gathered magical power, so that they might dwell among the gods or in another world beyond reality. Each time she sealed a soul inside the sarcophagus, she would then release it --- only to watch it transform into a zombie, into a corpse.

The sarcophagus helped her give rein to her merciless side --- for she played with these souls as if they were tennis balls. She could imprison a soul and release it, repeating the cycle over and over, as many times as she pleased... until those souls became wretched. If a soul found itself in Oya's captivity, that soul became wretched too.

Know this: souls were considered something of great importance --- and Oya's presumed power over them was no trivial matter.

Gods could be resurrected multiple times; most often they were resurrected in order to make important decisions. The resurrection of gods for the purpose of decision-making was a necessity, but only in matters of the greatest importance. For

example, questions of how to build a pyramid correctly, how to prepare potions, how to perform the rites associated with the pharaoh, and how to conduct other rituals.

Yet this was no ordinary act; resurrection was an extremely important and complex rite that required a long sequence of ceremonies. Many significant things had to be accomplished first. That is why the great tombs were built. The resurrection of gods was of vital importance to the entire empire. For the love and wars of certain gods became the cause of empires rising. These gods were objects of veneration. That is why the resurrection of gods was a necessity --- an absolute imperative!

One might conclude that the first evidence of zombies on earth was most likely connected to Oya herself. A theory, but a well-grounded one.

It is worth asking now why this theory might be correct. The deaths of gods and goddesses could be as accidental as the deaths of human beings. Only gods could live forever and be resurrected again and again.

Certain gods were able to resurrect other gods as zombies when they were needed to fulfil a mission within a specific period of time. After death, zombies would typically perform extraordinary acts that people called miracles. Yet they were killed again once the mission was complete.

This was explained primarily by the differences between the reality of the world of the dead and the world of the living --- they were two sides of the same coin, a striking contrast. The dead cared nothing for wealth and reputation; the living, however, cared deeply about both.

There was a time when people --- living beings --- were wild. They did not know fear of certain things --- of pain, death, God. But over time they became more aware of themselves and their surroundings, and began to compare themselves with others --- and this more powerfully influenced the relationships and events around them. This evolution of humanity proved quite useful, and over time people became easier to govern. These manipulations turned people into something resembling a crowd that could be controlled and used in one way or another.

Even since the Stone Age, people have been concerned with development and growth. They felt so acutely how much wealth each person and each family possessed, that those who lacked resources were despised, while those who had gold were revered --- even if they led unworthy lives.

Yet in the world of the dead, things were simpler --- souls simply communicated with one another whenever they wished. Now that they were dead, they lived life fully, and their hearts were free of fear --- but full of passion. This was the direct opposite of the living, who allowed fear to rule their minds, who sacrificed their lives to the false goals of others, because the fear of being different governed their thinking. Only passion will hold power over the gods, once the truth is revealed! This awakening and awareness led to a kind of enlightenment at various levels. People learned to govern their consciousness and to communicate at different frequencies. They learned to command other people using various methods of control --- from dictatorship to, eventually, the rule of law and legality. Regardless of whether they achieved this submission through respect, force, or fear --- what mattered was that they could govern people. They could make people obey their

commands --- and thus arose large groups of people, crowds that could be governed and used in one way or another.

Little is known about the subconscious mind. It is known that hypnosis, programming, and manipulation of biorhythms provoke in people a need to submit to certain commands on a subconscious level. Yet much still remains to be learned about what exactly triggers submission in the human subconscious.

Death

Death is the stopping of the heart, the cessation of breathing, and the failure of other organs. It may be that youth, old age, and the decay of the body have nothing to do with the soul. The soul is potentially capable of eternal life and love. According to some philosophers of the past, it is enclosed within the body during life and departs with the final breath after death. I also understand that the liver continues to function after death, but in reverse --- causing the body to decompose through the continuous production of catalysing enzymes.

Scientists and philosophers think differently about whether the soul exists at all, and if it does, how it influences our lives, our personalities, our feelings, and finally, what happens to it when we die. The ancient Greek philosophers had an interesting conception of the soul and what it means to be "alive," and what happens when a person "dies." In the Homeric poems, the soul was described as something that could be lost in battle or as a consequence of one's actions. When a person died, they lost their soul, and it departed to the Underworld --- a shadow or echo of the person they had been in life.

Yet possessing a soul was not synonymous with being "alive" --- it was mentioned only in the context of risk to life, and was not inseparably bound to personality, bodily functions, activity, and the like.

This changed in the sixth and fifth centuries, when Greek philosophy linked the concept of the soul with the concept of "life." Every living being had a soul, inseparably linked to our very essence --- to that which is capable of finding satisfaction in food, drink, and even carnal desires.

Moral qualities --- courage, bravery, and honesty --- were associated with a "strong soul," while people who lacked resilience or positive qualities had a "weak soul" --- as can be seen in the writings of Hippocrates and Herodotus.

Hippocrates wrote that it was impossible to know the true nature of a person's soul without looking into their soul. But why speak of this when we are discussing death?

Death...

Because it sheds some light on how human history linked these two concepts --- not only in ancient Greece, but also in Rome (anima), and even among Indian philosophers (atman). For all these ancient societies, the soul was inseparably connected to life and to how it faded after death.

The great question "where is the soul?" has never received a satisfactory answer. Although many have supposed that it resides in the chest, near the human heart --- and this is why it was associated with the presence (or absence) of moral qualities.

Pythagoras wrote that the soul extends from the chest to the heart, since it consists of mind, reason, and passion. In our own time, anatomists and physicians assert that it must be located somewhere deep within the brain.

Others --- for example, the Italian anatomist Giovanni Maria Lancisi or Albrecht von Haller --- wrote that the soul might reside in the corpus callosum or the medulla oblongata respectively --- as part of a complex neural pathway.

This makes sense, does it not? The soul is the vessel of everything that makes us who we are. In recent centuries it has become clear that memories are hidden deep within the hippocampus --- would it not be logical, then, if there existed a physical connection between our central nervous system and our very essence?

Nevertheless, I propose that the soul in the human body is located somewhere in the diaphragm. More precisely, in the central tendon of the diaphragm. In the central tendon, where the spirit is capable of ionising, activating life, and driving movement, action, carnal desires, and thought.

For the central tendon of the diaphragm is a powerful aponeurosis. The expansion and contraction of this tendon bring about the ionisation of the Spirit. This ionisation of the spirit propagates through the joints and the bone fluid. It sets the body in motion.

Descartes believed that the soul resided in the pineal gland --- an organ located below the midline of the brain, associated with processes such as the circadian rhythm and other physiological phenomena.

He also distinguished between mind and body, but equated the mind with the soul. This is interesting, because if these two concepts are inseparable, then what happens to the soul when we die?

Does it evaporate? Ascend to a higher plane? Become something else entirely? I am not the only one troubled by these questions --- researchers of the past tried to answer them too.

In 1907, Dr Duncan MacDougall conducted an experiment with the dying body of a tuberculosis patient. Placing the subject on sensitive platform scales, he carefully observed the change in the body's weight from the moment of death onwards.

His experiments led him to conclude that the human soul weighs approximately 14 to 42 grams. However, I am not aware of anyone who has successfully replicated his experiments. The scientific community as a whole remains sceptical of these claims.

Zombies

It would be wonderful if we could believe that the soul is immortal and that it carries within it information from the past. The soul that sustains life needs no food or water, but in order for the body to remain alive, it must breathe every single minute.

Breathing opens the way to the mysteries of the subconscious mind and the autonomic nervous system. When breathing changes, the pulse changes too --- which means the heart also responds to the breath.

The question arises: is it possible to determine what exactly a person breathes, in order to better understand their individual characteristics? Are they similar to others, or do they have their own particular type? After all, air is ordinary, and all living beings breathe the same air. And yet people's personalities and actions differ.

Science tells us that air consists primarily of hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen. We do not know the exact proportions, but it is possible that a certain "formula of the soul" combines these substances and forms personality on that basis. By conducting a deep chemical analysis of the respiratory system, I believe it would be possible to identify a person's psychological characteristics. By learning what resides in a person's soul, one could determine their inclinations and character.

The processes of energy transfer --- from gas to liquid, then into work, and back to gas again --- occur continuously. This is the factor of life. The respiratory system, the kidneys' excretory function, and the circulation of blood work ceaselessly together with the heart throughout the duration of life. After death, restoring all of these processes simultaneously is no simple matter.

*Therefore, an increase in electrical voltage may be required. The electrical conductivity of a gas can be significantly increased by adding a small amount of vapour from a substance with a low ionisation potential, such as potassium.

The functioning of the nervous system and the behaviour of living organisms are governed by electrical impulses and currents.

Electrolysis is of enormous importance to the body's metabolism, providing conductivity in fluids. Acids, alkalis, and aqueous solutions of salts conduct current well. But almost a billion times less efficiently than conducting metals.

Electrical processes in the body are carried out by photons within electrolytes. Free charges of gases do not enter into ordered movement under the influence of electrical current. A gas can become a conductor only when its molecules are ionised --- that is, when they break down into electrons and positive ions. The ionisation of external gas molecules occurs either under the influence of short-wave radiation (cosmic, X-ray, or radioactive), or under the action of heat. If gases contain moisture with an admixture of inorganic particles and are ionised, they also conduct electricity. These electrical impulses are capable of charging the body and turning it into a system even several weeks after death.

Perhaps it is precisely the question of what resides in the soul and how that influences a person's inclinations and character that has given rise to many other questions --- for example, about the location of the soul. The question "where is the soul?" has never received a satisfactory answer over all these years.

Various theories have attempted to answer it. But the most widespread theory holds that it resides in the chest, near the human heart. Proponents of this theory maintain that the soul's proximity to the heart explains its connection to the presence (or absence) of moral qualities.

Pythagoras wrote that moral qualities extend from the soul to the heart, since the soul consists of mind, reason, and passion. In our own time, however, things have changed --- anatomists and physicians maintain that it must reside somewhere deep within the brain.

Nevertheless, I prefer to believe that the soul in the human body is located somewhere in the diaphragm. More precisely, in the central tendon of the diaphragm. In the central tendon, where the spirit is capable of ionising, activating life, and driving movement, action, carnal desires, and thought.

For the central tendon of the diaphragm is a powerful aponeurosis, and the expansion and contraction of this tendon bring about the ionisation of the Spirit. This ionisation of the spirit propagates through the joints and the bone fluid and sets the body in motion.

Perhaps it is the soul itself that sets the bodily fluids and functions in motion, moving through our organs to give us life. After all, imagination exists for various purposes, does it not? Consider this: the body is a vessel for the soul. The body needs energy, and the soul is ready to give it; for the soul is the very energy that animates the body. Nerve impulses are electrical ionic currents. It is through the presence of the soul that trace elements move and metabolic processes take place.

Animals use specialised cells called neurons to coordinate muscular activity; nerves are bundles of neurons or their components. Neurons communicate with one another by means of chemical messengers, but within a single (often very long) cell they are capable of transmitting high-speed signals by means of a wave of ionic polarisation (analogous to electrical current) along their membranes --- a property common to all cells, but in nerve cells developed through special adaptations for the sake of speed.

Sodium is the primary ion in the fluid outside cells, while potassium is the primary ion in the fluid inside cells. These differences in concentration create an electrical gradient across the cell membrane, and this gradient is called the resting potential.

Strict control of the membrane resting potential is critically important for the transmission of nerve impulses. The balance in the concentrations of these elements determines the characteristic traits of both animals and people.

The body is like a machine that needs a driver --- a driver who serves as the intelligence governing certain processes. This intelligence resembles ether, ionised substances, and bioenergy. It knows no limits in the universe --- except for the higher will, God, and chance.

The spiritual world can be perceived at the photonic level. However, some people's vision is sensitive to other parts of the light spectrum. This is precisely why certain people are able to see or sense the presence of ghosts.

Photons excite matter and give rise to atomic fluorescence. Spectra, in turn, reflect transitions from the ground state to the nearest excited state --- depending on the quantity of photons.

As a result, elements are capable of emitting ultraviolet, infrared, and even visible light --- all of this can arise under the influence of heat and ultraviolet rays... These elements are capable of ionising and penetrating a body or object, charging the spirit with energy. Normally, when such elements penetrate the human body, such people are called possessed. Simply put, a possessed person is one whose spirit has been penetrated by ionised elements.

When life or spirit is breathed into a dead body in the form of ionic current, the body becomes a zombie. That is, if a dead body is filled with a foreign spirit or current, it is transformed into a zombie.

The problem is that the reanimated corpse will be mentally disturbed.

Most importantly, it will not remember past memories or who it was; it will not even remember what it wants. Instead, it will obey only basic instincts.

This explanation may seem a little confusing, but one should not forget that the resurrected is different from the zombie. This is because the resurrected has had their own spirit and energy returned to their body. They may even retain their memory and continue to live as they did before, or even travel the world.

With the zombie, however, things are different --- they no longer possess either personality or spirit.

It would be possible to resurrect a body without direct contact, by restoring the conduction of energy between the main chakras. Otherwise, it is necessary to breathe in a similar spirit, based on psychotype.

All the senses are connected to the chakras, in which certain energy centres are located.

Every person's mind perceives and absorbs reality in its own way. Their response to what they have perceived is a kind of reply --- the body's own reaction to what is happening, forming an energetic feedback loop with the external world. Through this response, the chakras are capable of growing and supplying the sense organs with additional information.

The brain is the centre of the nervous system and the sense organs. Yet it is not the driving force or the source of life. After all, in comparison with how developed the senses are and what goals are pursued, what memory consists of is not so very important. Nothing is retained as firmly as that which is connected to the senses.

And this is a wonderful way to charge the body and the mind with energy.

Furthermore, the connection to the higher mind is conditioned by the capabilities of the spirit and the workings of the diaphragm, and not solely by the activity of the heart and brain.

Is the soul immortal?

We are all part of the Universe. Is the atom immortal? Perhaps the soul is also capable of changing gender and other qualities upon rebirth. Does the higher mind permit personality to be preserved, regardless of how many changes that personality undergoes throughout eternity?

Many scientists clung firmly to the conception of the human soul and of its transformation or disappearance after a person's death. Over the centuries, these conceptions changed slowly.

Thomas Alva Edison, a well-known rationalist of his era, confidently denied the existence of the soul --- or at least directly equated it with the mind, though he

refused to call it that. He also believed that if the soul did exist, it could not be immortal.

This prompts a number of interesting reflections. If the soul is contained within a specific region of our body, it means that it has a definite form. It is therefore limited --- and may thus be immortal.

However, if the soul is immortal, it cannot reside in any part of our body, for it is grander and more transcendent than that.

Neuroscientists of the twentieth century approached this question differently. Some of them, for example, do not regard the soul as some kind of immortal concept, but rather see it merely as a synonym for our abstract consciousness.

Quoting Christopher Pallis: "The loss of the capacity for consciousness and the capacity to breathe (following brain death) is associated with functional disorders at opposite ends of the brain stem, with the former also constituting a meaningful alternative formulation of the concept of 'departure of the soul.'"

If the soul is consciousness, then what happens to people who are in a coma? Does this mean that their soul has left them, or is it still there? The most noble of organs --- the brain --- is functioning incorrectly. The connection between these two concepts remains a mystery to me to this day.

Bioenergetics: The Body as a System After Death

The ideas about the ionisation of the spirit and about electrolysis, set out above, in fact describe one and the same picture from two different angles, and I would like to bring them together.

While a person is alive, the difference in the concentration of sodium outside the cell and potassium inside it creates an electrical gradient across the cell membrane --- the resting potential. This gradient is actively maintained, at the constant cost of energy, and it is precisely its change that underlies the nerve impulse: a wave of ionic polarisation runs along the neuron's membrane much as an electrical current runs along a wire. While the heart beats and the kidneys and circulation are working, this gradient is restored millions of times per second throughout the body --- and it is precisely this restoration that I call 'life' in the most literal, physical sense.

At the moment of death, restoration ceases, but the gradient itself does not disappear instantaneously. Electrolytes --- acids, alkalis, dissolved salts --- remain in the tissues for some time and continue to conduct current, however gradually weakening. If at this moment additional energy arrives from outside --- whether in the form of heat, short-wave radiation, or, as I suggest, the addition of vapour from a substance with a low ionisation potential such as potassium --- the electrical conductivity of the tissues can briefly be increased. It is in this sense that I say the body 'becomes a system' even weeks after death: it remains a conductor capable of temporarily carrying a current, although it is no longer capable of generating one itself.

The difference between the 'zombie' and the 'resurrected,' discussed above, is simple to explain within this framework: resurrection is the restoration of the body's

own gradient, the very internal source that pumped ions millions of times per second during life. The state of 'zombie' in this metaphor is a body that conducts current again but receives it from outside rather than generating it itself --- hence the absence of memory, will, and personality mentioned at the beginning of the chapter: the current is there, but the source that once directed it is gone.

Resurrection

Resurrection may have had the power to make people marvel at how extraordinary it was, but it was not widely accepted --- especially by those who held power in one form or another.

In several empires, rulers did not want people to be resurrected. Neither did murderers --- for the former held power through fear, and the latter through killing. And how were rulers supposed to make their subjects fear them if those subjects could be returned to life after a death sentence?

How could a murderer be paid to cut someone's throat in their sleep if the person they had been hired to kill could be brought back to life whole and unharmed just two days later?

Whatever their disagreements on other matters, rulers and killers were united on one point: resurrection had to be forbidden... and punished by death.

The luxury of court life beckoned ordinary people. They wanted to live at the pharaoh's court. They knew that once they had gained entry to the palace and begun collecting taxes from others, they would never again have to toil so hard.

Resurrection poses a challenge to the powerful, for it undermines the ultimate threat they hold over the people. If death itself can be reversed, what leverage remains?

Consider this from a different angle. When someone dies, a vast estate may change hands. Fortunes are redistributed. Power shifts. Now imagine that the dead rise again. The entire machinery of inheritance, of succession, of conquest --- it collapses. A resurrected emperor reclaims his throne. A murdered king walks back into his palace.

This is precisely why the control of resurrection --- and of the narrative around death --- has always been inseparable from the control of power itself.

The ancient Egyptians understood this deeply. Their entire funerary tradition --- the mummification, the spells of the Book of the Dead, the elaborate preparations for the afterlife --- was not merely religious sentiment. It was politics. It was the management of power across the threshold of death.

The pharaoh alone was guaranteed full resurrection. Ordinary people might hope for a partial afterlife. The further down the hierarchy you were, the less your resurrection was worth. Even in death, the pyramid held.

And so the story of resurrection, from the earliest myths to the present day, is also the story of who gets to decide who rises --- and who stays in the ground.

Perhaps the most honest reading of resurrection mythology is this: those who promise resurrection always ask for something in return. Obedience. Sacrifice. Tribute. The soul is offered eternal life on the condition that it submits.

This is the oldest contract in human history.

It is possible to speak of resurrection in terms of modern science as well. Clinically dead patients who have been resuscitated report experiences --- light at the end of a tunnel, meetings with deceased relatives, a sense of peace and weightlessness. Neuroscientists typically explain these as the product of a brain starved of oxygen. But what if the brain, in those final moments, is not hallucinating --- but perceiving?

I do not claim to know the answer. What I do claim is that the question deserves to be taken seriously, without either the naive credulity of folklore or the dismissive certainty of a scientific worldview that has itself been wrong many times before.

Resurrection, in the end, may not be a single event but a process. The body may die in stages. The soul --- whatever it is, wherever it resides --- may linger. The electrical system of the body does not shut down all at once. The ions in the tissues continue to conduct for hours, sometimes days.

In that sense, the moment of death is not a moment at all. It is a crossing --- slow, gradual, and not yet fully understood.

What does this mean for zombies? In the framework I am proposing, a zombie is a body that has been kept in that crossing --- neither fully dead nor truly alive. The ionic system has been maintained or restarted by external means, but the soul --- the organising intelligence, the spirit that directed those ions with purpose --- has gone.

The result is motion without intention. Response without memory. A body that acts, but does not think. A body that moves, but does not feel.

This is why, across every culture that has developed a zombie mythology, the zombie is not frightening because it is dead. It is frightening because it is almost alive.

Almost.

That almost is where the soul used to be.

Pain and Pleasure

The concept of pain is multilayered, because it can be wielded as different kinds of weapon. People control animals, for example, by inflicting pain upon them. In this way they attempt to regulate the decisions and lives of animals.

Suppose there is a farmer growing corn on his land. He knows that a goat keeps jumping the fence to devour the leaves and cobs --- and he wants to do something about it. So he begins to drive the goat away with sticks, then escalates to electric shocks. A little cruel, perhaps...

But in all likelihood that goat will stop coming to the farm the day the farmer manages to land a good blow across its haunches with his stick. Such is the power of pain.

The same pattern of interaction is found in human society. Naturally, pain provokes emotional responses --- tears, pleas, cries. When people inflict pain deliberately, the reactions of victims change. Men typically either resist their own pain or prefer to inflict pain on others. This feeling is called anger. Anger is an irritation or resentment that cannot bring pleasure unless it yields satisfaction or helps achieve a goal. This often occurs from an early age between people of the same or different sex. There are bullies among people --- even among children --- because some find it easier to impose their will through force or fighting. They do not know how to be natural leaders --- they do not know how to take control of a situation and deal with people correctly.

And so they resort to violence. Yet maintaining control in this way often leads to the breakdown of social relationships. Ultimately it leads to problems with both mental and physical health.

Pain and death are two oceans in the psychic energy of a human being! Both change a life --- not the spirit of a person, but rather their personality. This happens because the matter concerns psychological space --- psychological trauma. And the particular quality of psychological trauma is that people always remember it, and it affects them in different ways. It either makes them wiser or weakens them --- making them more resilient or, on the contrary, "unable to cope." Their fears also mean that they do not repeat the same mistakes.

Pain operates both at the level of basic instincts and at the sexual level. When it comes to the sexual level, this is mainly connected to heightened stress, which in turn increases sexual activity.

The difference between these two "oceans" --- pain and death --- is that after death, in the future, the memory of trauma remains at a subconscious, incorporeal level.

This is precisely why it is so important to derive pleasure from one's work, its results, and its outcomes. It is equally important to consciously engage in activities one loves. In practising this, be sure that you are not submitting to someone else's pressure or coercion. If you are under someone's control when you are "supposed to enjoy your work," then something is wrong. In such a case, a conflict of interests and nervous tension will arise.

High tension and overexcitement lead to a loss of sensitivity, which in turn disrupts neural connections and causes dysfunction. As a result of the heightened production of hormones, certain minerals are flushed from the body.

When these minerals are leached from the body, people --- athletes, for example --- begin to suffer from various illnesses caused by a deficiency of certain elements. This makes people unhealthy and physically unfit, which means their labour could be replaced by machinery.

However, one must know where to draw the line --- for machines are not designed for use by ill-intentioned parties and must serve the common interests of people and the environment.

Heavy labour, therefore, must be safe and healthy. Otherwise it is harmful to the soul, the body, and the mind. Nothing is more precious than a life one wishes to preserve forever.

Social equilibrium is also critically important to the survival of human society. First, under the influence of hierarchy (and due to political conventions), a stratification of society took shape. And then the problems began --- such as the abuse of power by officials, and the intimidation of the weak by the strong. Since the strong were more dangerous than the weak, the laws had no fair balance. The social system worked to satisfy the ruling tier of the hierarchy.

In time, an economy formed. It was structured in such a way that it became convenient for manipulation, but ultimately everyone grew dependent on finances. Within this financial dependency, intellectual skills change the rules of the game and influence a person's standing in society. And so the rich grow richer and independent of labour, while the poor remain dependent on it.

One can change jobs and build a career, but changing the people around one is not so simple. Depending on climate, geography, culture, status, and hormonal balance, people are different. If it were possible to determine the true nature and instincts of people by means of some kind of trust coefficient, this would be enormously helpful --- and it could be achieved by assessing the deficit of trust in people in general, in order to limit trust within closed societies.

Certain closed societies and groups accept new members by selecting them according to personal qualities, ideas, and/or sex --- in order to develop and preserve certain social practices. Such a division of people into groups might assist in personal development and the understanding of one's own abilities.

The Soul of the Resurrected

It takes little time for me to understand: the human mind has long been fascinated by what happens after our loved ones leave this world.

Perhaps the soul dissolves, breaking into the tiniest fragments that wander through the cosmos, or perhaps it drifts purposelessly until the sun extinguishes itself in its death throes. Can a person's soul return to their body after death? Resurrection is also a common motif in mythology. In Greek mythology, the underworld was not a place without exits --- on the contrary, a good many famous characters managed to leave it.

In the countries and beliefs of the Caribbean, faith in black magic and the resurrection of others remains strong to this day --- in such concepts as voodoo and necromancy. These islands became a melting pot of Catholic, African, and indigenous beliefs, giving rise to this hybrid.

But these resurrected beings did not possess the same qualities as an ordinary person. I am curious about what transformations their soul undergoes, or perhaps their soul does not return at all, and they are merely vessels containing the will of the one who created them --- as I perceive in many of these stories.

Imagine this: a little girl is dying on the ground. Her parents are horrified by the prospect of losing her. The girl's eyes are slightly open, and tears stream from them --- because she knows. She knows she is dying.

And then someone intervenes and tells her parents everything about resurrection --- and about the people who have already been brought back to life by means of it.

"How do we do this for her?" asks the mother.

The informant will tell them everything that needs to be done. Since everything is fairly straightforward, the parents nod in agreement. They will wait for the girl to die, then carry her to a secluded place where all the necessary rites can be performed. After the rites, they will clasp their hands in prayer and wait, hoping for the best.

Several hours later, they will hear a voice calling: "Mama!" "Papa!"

They will leap to their feet with joy --- a mixture of tears, laughter, and shock --- because although they knew what they had done, they were not entirely certain of success until the girl returned to life... until they saw that their little one was truly alive.

Joy will be visible in their eyes --- together with a growing disbelief that they had truly cheated death! Imagine all those people who have lost their loved ones --- and how much happiness they would receive if those they love were resurrected.

The beauty of resurrection lies in saving lives and in reducing the level of human mortality. It helps us rid ourselves of fear --- the fear of death --- and helps us cope with the negative aspects of life.

Resurrection truly changes a person's view of the world and kindles a great deal of hope in our hearts, especially in moments of hopelessness.

Death, Life, Soul: an immutable connection. Few things are as pervasive in our world as Death. Death is always near --- it is an inescapable fact of life. Yet Death is not a fact that exists in a vacuum; since time immemorial we have linked it with spirituality, deities, illness, tragedy, and much else besides.

I have reflected many times on humanity's relationship with Death throughout the course of our history.

What is the connection between the cessation of our bodily functions, our minds, and the Soul? What happens to the latter when we die? Does it disappear along with the Body? Does it reincarnate? Does it become something else entirely?

These are some of the questions I will touch on in the pages that follow.

Personal Identification: A New System

There are many ways to identify a person, but what is actually meant by the concept of 'identity' has never been precisely defined. At present it amounts to an essentially random collection --- a number, a name, a place and time of birth.

In my view, personal identification based on psychological and biological parameters would be more meaningful than a full name and place of birth. If a

person's body becomes difficult to identify, a laboratory examination is conducted and the person is identified by their biological DNA code. This is a different, more natural approach to individual identity, and it is one that, in my opinion, should have formed the basis of any identification system from the outset, rather than being employed only as a last resort.

In this second edition I would like to set out this idea in more detail, as a plan rather than mere intuition:

First, registration based on the micro-movements of the body and facial expressions. Just as a person's handwriting is unique, so is their bodily expressiveness --- the way they hold their shoulders, how they move their hands in conversation, how their face changes at a moment of hesitation or untruth. These micro-movements are more stable than a name, which can be changed, and more precise than a photograph, which captures only a single moment.

Second, the recording of specific biorhythms --- the individual rhythm of the heart, breathing, and the cycles of sleep and wakefulness, which, like a fingerprint, is shaped by both genetics and lifestyle but is significantly harder to falsify.

Third --- and this is the most contentious part of the proposal --- a deep chemical analysis of the respiratory system. Conducting such an analysis might make it possible to identify a person's psychological characteristics and inclinations, including towards violence, at an early stage, before those inclinations have had time to manifest. I want to be honest: I have no clinical data or laboratory confirmation of this idea --- it is a hypothesis born of reflections on the 'formula of the soul' that forms the subject of the 'Zombies' chapter in this part, and not the result of scientific research. I present it here not as a ready-made solution but as a direction in which, it seems to me, it would be worth searching.

If taken to the level of a practical plan, this might include at minimum: the creation and implementation of a system of identification and registration of persons, including the development of appropriate software for verifying the identification system; cooperation with doctors and bioengineers for concluding a contract for the provision of data-entry services; training and provision of the necessary equipment and consumables. This is, of course, a task for neither one person nor one book --- but this, it seems to me, is how the first step from idea to system might look.

I want to say that every person is unique, but there are also common types of people. And what makes them alike may be hidden deep in the soul, the psyche, physical potential, or even intellect. A certain part of the psyche functions autonomously, not submitting to the commands and will of other people --- in this domain, neither facts nor arguments have any effect on a person. Few people try to understand the nature of their feelings and reflexes --- probably because this demands more attention and psychic energy than it might appear.

This same thought will return in the book once more, this time not as theory but as a line of conversation --- in Part Three, in the story of my friend Sabina: sometimes the establishment of a person's identity is not merely a bureaucratic procedure but the only way to recognise in time who is truly standing before you.

Death and the History of Humanity

Modern evidence tells me that we human beings are the only creatures possessed of sufficient self-awareness to understand that one day we will cease to exist (though cases have been recorded of animals grieving over a dying or dead offspring).

Nevertheless, I have found that the perception of Death varies considerably depending on epoch, culture, and place. Looking back to the ancient civilisations, they gave the concept of Death a spiritual dimension, and it frequently went --- and still goes --- hand in hand with the concept of an afterlife.

Many monotheistic religions (such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and so on) preach a certain form of life after death --- a heavenly reward for all the good deeds performed by their followers during their lifetimes.

Consider the ancient mythologies. The concept of Death and the Underworld is ever-present within them. In Greek or Roman mythology, it was a common narrative thread to encounter death, descend into the deepest recesses of the Underworld, and overcome it by returning to the land of the living.

And so, as I have found, all these rites, mythologies, beliefs, and conceptions --- each of them, in its own way, reflects a particular view of death and the life that follows it.

Death from a cellular point of view. Spirituality and religion are not its only dimensions: death is also a series of biological processes. But let us dig deeper, into the microscopic world. What happens in our bodies when death arrives?

Respiration is understood as the exchange of gases between the body and the surrounding environment, encompassing the absorption of oxygen and the release of carbon dioxide.

We are carbon-based organisms that require oxygen to survive. We breathe oxygen through our lungs; only a few molecules possess the physical and biochemical properties that allow them to pass through the blood-air barrier (also known as the alveolar-capillary barrier), but as far as I understand, oxygen is remarkably well-suited for this purpose.

Oxygen enters the bloodstream, the intercellular space, and finally the cells themselves. It is the primary, most indispensable substrate for survival. Organisms that consume oxygen dissolve it in the blood.

The body absorbs oxygen and releases carbon dioxide and carbon through electrolysis --- a combination reaction. To carry out this reaction at the molecular level, two molecules of oxygen and two molecules of carbon are required.

Oxygen is converted into ATP --- the energy "currency," the necessary fuel that sustains the functioning of our metabolism. This energy can be converted into many other things --- into heat or even into electrical current.

*In biological membranes, currents are carried by ionic salts. The tiny openings in cell membranes, called ion channels, are selective towards certain ions and determine membrane resistance through attraction mediated by lattice photons.

The functioning of the nervous system and the behaviour of living organisms are governed by electrical impulses and currents.

When the level of oxygen in the body falls, hypoxia occurs (literally --- a shortage of oxygen). Hypoxia is capable of leading to two outcomes: apoptosis and necrosis.

The first is a "programmed" form of death, in which cells undergo organised self-destruction in order to avoid further damage to neighbouring tissue. This occurs naturally within our bodies, sometimes leading to atrophy or other physiological changes (for example, during the stage of foetal development).

The second is more dangerous. Necrosis is an "unprogrammed" form of death, in which a cell "explodes," releasing its contents (enzymes, cytokines, ions, and so on) into the external environment.

Intracellular contents are dangerous because the cells outside are unable to cope with these substances, and the damage spreads further.

This leads to the death of vital tissue --- the heart, lungs, or brain. For instance: cardiac or pulmonary infarction, hepatic and intestinal necrosis, cerebral haemorrhage. These pathological changes are irreversible, sometimes even life-threatening; they lead to oedema and decomposition --- signalling the "end."

Death in the Legal Sphere

Defining death in the way I did in the previous section is the simpler approach. But in life, things rarely happen in a vacuum. Society simply does not perceive death as the final biological process through which we pass.

In reality, defining death is more complex. In earlier times, it was the chest that occupied the central place in the process of dying. If one thing ceases to function, the other will soon follow, and the person will die.

However, studying the development of medical technology in the twentieth century, I gradually came to understand how medical thinking shifted the focus from the chest to the brain.

When the heart stops beating, blood flow to the brain ceases. Prolonged hypoxia can cause irreversible damage, leading to coma --- the worst of possible outcomes.

Coma. What I perceive as a nightmarish purgatory between one "station" (life) and another (death). A "healthy body" --- but with a broken mind.

And so, in 1968, the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of Harvard Medical School appeared, defining death as irreversible coma associated with the loss of brain function. No longer is it only a matter of the heart or other organs --- the focus has settled on the brain.

The pathologists Arthur Bidl and Rudolf Kraus demonstrated that coma develops when bile acids are introduced directly into brain tissue. Specific hormones are needed to fall asleep and to wake. Bile is a poison, and no antidote to it exists. But the removal of the poison through the use of salts by means of crystallisation can prevent the body from being poisoned again. In this way, neutralising and purifying

the general chemical balance and increasing the "waking hormone" may be capable of bringing a person out of a comatose state.

Here opens an entire Pandora's box --- legal charges of murder, manslaughter, and the like. Humanity has striven towards control and order, towards fellowship, towards the renunciation of mutual killing. Raising a hand against one's neighbour and taking their life is a grievous sin.

Today, killing is classified according to whether it was committed with malicious intent or without, whether it was premeditated or not ("first degree" and "second degree" murder), and whether the death of another person was the direct or indirect consequence of one's actions ("felony murder").

Lawyers argue and fight with one another on the battlefield that is the courtroom, employing every manner of dishonest tactic, loophole, and verbal evasion to determine whether the crime was truly "murder" or not.

If you were to ask around twenty thousand people what they fear most, approximately seventy percent of them would give you the same answer.

"Death," they would say.

Each of them would have their own reasons for the same answer, but one reason is most obvious --- they all fear the moment when they will cease to live.

Different religions and cultures have attempted to define what may exist after death; and it is precisely this uncertainty that drives many people almost to madness.

"What would you do if you found out you had only one week to live?" --- this question has received a good many interesting answers over the years.

"I would go to the one place I have always wanted to visit."

"I would tell my best friend that I am in love with her."

"I would quit my job and spend my time doing what makes me happy."

There were far wilder answers, too --- but they all come down to one central fact: the fear of the unknown.

Now imagine if people could live every day as if it were the only day life had to offer. What if we loved more passionately? What if we pursued our passions relentlessly?

It is precisely this fear that makes people live as they do --- cautiously, with the utmost circumspection, tiptoeing through life. They do not allow themselves to take up enough space; they do not do all the things that bring them joy. Instead, they prefer to be shadows, slipping away and retreating so as not to be noticed... simply because they do not want to die. The trouble is that they forget: all people die in the end.

Many are so absorbed in living "safely" that it is difficult to imagine what would change if they came to understand that death is not the end. Perhaps then they would allow themselves to live with passion.

Human beings are by nature vulnerable, prone to emotion. This means that we feel everything keenly. When something good happens, we rejoice. When something bad happens, we grieve.

This means that when we love, we are truly happy, and when we lose --- or come close to losing --- those dear to us, we are seized by panic, already dreading the very thought of life without them.

These feelings mean that we will fight to the very last with all the strength we have --- for it is embedded in human nature to overcome adverse circumstances. And if there were a chance --- however strange --- to keep our loved ones alive or bring them back to life, many of us would probably take it.

The stories told earlier speak of gods and people whose souls were seized at the moment of death in order to resurrect them when the need arose.

The simplicity of this act means that more people would contemplate the possibility of bringing their loved ones back to life. They would embrace this possibility willingly.

The truth is that thousands of people would give a very great deal to bring back a family member or someone close to them --- whether in the form of a zombie or resurrected versions of themselves.

If a new life were guaranteed each time after death, how wonderful it would be, how marvellous --- to learn to identify one's soul and be capable of restoring it? How much more fully people would live their lives if they knew that they could always be resurrected --- if they knew that they truly had nothing to fear in the pursuit of their passion and their lives?

Seven out of ten people suffer from one form of depression or another --- from the loss of a job to the loss of friends, family, and loved ones. Would their lives not be immeasurably better if they could erase all those "what ifs" that torment their minds?

Depression would diminish greatly if these people were given a chance to save those they love. And do you know what happens when people stop being depressed?

They begin to do everything possible to live a beautiful life!

The world may not be carpeted in roses, but things would certainly be far better if the chances of resurrection were high. This would change life for the better for a great many people --- they would begin to live more fully.

Some Closing Thoughts

This text does not seek to answer the age-old riddles that have puzzled so many fields of learning --- from biochemistry and forensic medicine to philosophy and theology. I do not possess the necessary knowledge or experience for that.

But I have nonetheless attempted to raise a few interesting thoughts about our bodies, about the ways in which the soul can be perceived --- as something dependent upon the body, or as a concept that extends beyond the boundaries of

our mortal life, ready to become something else entirely as soon as we draw our last breath.



Part II. The History of Power and Predation

The second part of the book looks not inward at the human being but outward --- at the history of the human race as a history of power and predation. From the fratricide of Cain and Abel and the myth of Osiris and Set --- to Genghis Khan, the empires of the Near East, the western kingdoms, and the genocides of the modern era: in all these examples the same mechanism is visible --- the fear of death, which rulers use to keep the crowd under control. If the first part of the book asked what death means for the individual, this part asks what the threat of death means for an entire society --- and how that threat, century after century, was turned into an instrument of power.

Kill or Die

Every person dies, but not every person kills

Who is not afraid of death? The more a person fears dying, the more willing they are to kill in order to survive. These secret codes, hidden in the darkest corners of the soul's dwelling, are capable of driving anyone to madness.

The struggle for primacy and dominance has accompanied the human race throughout all time. The loudest of atrocities are the killings of close associates and family members. For financial or political reasons, to consolidate power or out of a hunting instinct --- such crimes are encountered among many peoples of the world.

A person who strives for dominance needs to gain power over others; they are prepared to do anything to be feared or obeyed, and in pursuit of this they commit numerous crimes and atrocities to restrict the freedom of people and compel them to submit to their rules.

In this book we will speak of the most notorious cases of fratricide, genocide, and of the nature of those who commit them.

The nature of criminals. Certain people --- as a result of psychological trauma, mental illness, or the circumstances of their era --- were possessed by the desire to become rulers of peoples, to subjugate others, to terrorise those who refused to submit. They believed that the struggle for supremacy knew no limits. Using every means and method, their hands stained with blood, they risked their own lives

merely to sit upon a throne for a time. In the Middle Ages this was the supreme goal --- and a high price was paid for it.

Dictators and warlords abused their privileges to demonstrate power.

Power has several meanings. The physical measure of power is the formula of work multiplied by time.

The intellectual potential of a person is capable of shaping their life, making them an exemplar of their era and their destiny --- capable of things others cannot achieve.

The more common societal concept is political power. When, in defiance of accepted laws and hiding behind diplomatic immunity, corrupt authorities pursue a different, concealed strategy: to possess privilege is to partially possess power. The leaders of nations hold more power than other people.

Persuading everyone that only a chosen few are given the right to create or to break the law.

That which the majority of people are not permitted to do.

Such intrigues have been woven since ancient times within the upper strata of society for the governance of the state. The games of power lead to misfortunes --- lives taken, imprisonments, the collection of taxes and duties to expand state power. These rulers are imposed on the people, convincing everyone that they alone are capable of making proper use of the power and responsibility entrusted to them.

Some rulers want to possess several peoples; some want the entire world. Often the selection of rulers involves the violent elimination of rivals and competitors. The greater the chances for individual "farmers," the poorer the choices available to the people.

Magic and Power

Magic is the ability to change the world around one, subordinating it to the will or desire of the magician. All living beings change the world around them in their own way. Some possess a highly developed psyche, nervous system, spiritual development, physical strength, labour, or machinery. All of these influence the world around us in their own manner.

Decision-making is almost as powerful as magic. If it depends upon you --- then you are a magician capable of fulfilling your own wishes. If it does not depend upon you, when you obey others and fulfil their wishes --- then you are not.

Decision-making is a particular power possessed by all living beings in order to satisfy various needs and goals. But the more intelligent a person is, the greater the variety of their thoughts compared with those of primitive animals.

An animal is a complex organism that uses several means of obtaining energy: breathing, drinking, eating, the senses, and information. Emotions also charge one with energy when one is motivated, or alternatively provide psychological release when one is disappointed.

Bees, for example, have a more developed psyche than butterflies. They can be more aggressive in defending their home. Although both creatures live in the same conditions and feed on the same floral nectar, butterflies spend most of their lives as if in a dream. They interact by means of their vivid colouring, which suggests that their organs of sight, taste, and smell are more developed than the mental reactions that trigger aggression or fear.

It may be that the essential oils of nectars are less acidic or act differently on the brains of butterflies than on those of bees.

In ancient times there existed a magical tribe, into which only men were selected and in which only men lived.

Those who possessed high psychic potential, which also meant strength of will. They lived in harmony with nature. The tribe was situated in an ancient civilisation known as Mesopotamia. Magic is the willpower of the magician.

They were in contact with the forces of nature --- earth, fire, and wind. Some magicians knew how to command fire: with a single gesture they gave a signal, and the fire blazed. Some magicians taught how to work with the earth. Everything we have is thanks to the earth. The magicians knew that our spirit resembles the wind within the body and is the primary source of life and rebirth.

Only men could enter this tribe, and from childhood they were raised to become powerful magicians. For children are easier to guide and direct.

Rumours about the tribe spread far beyond their lands. People believed in them, and some envied them.

Many came to challenge the magicians to battle, but the magicians were confident that their magical power existed for the salvation of the world, not its destruction. Ordinary people could not resist the will of the magicians.

The time came, and the Sixteenth appeared. He came to kill all the magicians. Within a matter of days, not a single magician in the tribe survived. The entire tribe was slaughtered --- adults, elders, and children alike. The Sixteenth understood that his strength lay in killing. This was how he intended to acquire power. This, in his view, was how one could rule the world.

Only the memory of their teachings spread across the world. And anyone who dreamed of power received only false knowledge.

For centuries, power and will were associated with cruelty and injustice. Many false magicians imposed their own "path of magic" in order to govern the lives and minds of people.

In the Middle Ages, all knowledge of magic became intertwined with chemistry, medicines, and poisons. As science advanced, more and more people ceased to believe in magic and began to follow the laws of the psyche in order to achieve their goals.

The history of the rise of the world religion of Islam is also shrouded in political intrigues, the destruction of members of the founder's family and clan. The violent killing of the Prophet, the expulsion of his relatives from the country, and the

subsequent conquest of neighbouring lands for the sake of unification under a single faith --- all of this reflects ambiguously on the politics of that era.

Fratricide

From the very beginning of time, power was what people craved in order to influence, direct, control, and compel others to be obedient and devoted to them. When a person acquires power, they seek still more power, in order to govern as many things as possible and dispose of them according to their own will.

This can be traced back to ancient times, when monarchs and kings ruled over almost the entire world and waged war against one another for new territories. Unlike magic, power exhausts a person, making them more vulnerable; there are things that generate power --- such as envy and jealousy. When you envy someone, it compels you to want to be better than they are or to do the same as they do. And so people find all manner of ways to obtain what they desire --- for example, Abel and Cain, two brothers who grew up together but were unlike one another in character and attitude towards life. The Bible tells us that both brought gifts to God in sacrifice. When they presented their offerings to God, He blessed Abel's offering but not Cain's. Cain was distressed and led his brother into a field, where he killed him, thinking this would change the fact that God had blessed only his brother's offering --- not knowing that he would be cursed for it.

The killing of a brother by his brother out of a lust for power was a fairly common occurrence in the ancient world. The first example that comes to mind is the famous myth of the two sons of Adam and Eve, Abel and Cain.

The stories of Cain and Abel teach that the very structure of human existence is important to the way life is built. Mortality enters the world either through the grace of Adam and Eve or through Abel's sacrifice at Cain's hand. However agonising this may be, it is nevertheless a gateway to the human imagination.

Without death there is no life.

These covenants compel people to embrace the fertility of agriculture and of childbirth, which makes them in the likeness of YHWH. In order to give life to the earth or to another person, Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel --- each of them had to surrender their life in an unexpected way.

In most interpretations of the Cain and Abel narrative, certain scholars charge Cain with blasphemy and murder, and see in this story an explanation of the irreconcilable enmity between farmers and herders.

Abel was older than Cain. They also had a younger brother, Seth. By their father's will, the brothers were required to bring an offering to the Lord. Abel was a shepherd and brought a gift from his flocks. Cain was a landowner and brought a gift from his labours. The Lord chose Abel's gift, paying no heed to Cain's. Wounded, Cain lured his brother into a field and killed him there.

The Lord asked Cain: "Where is your brother?"

Cain replied: "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

There is a similar Egyptian story --- that of Osiris and Set. Osiris was talented and successful, teaching people viticulture, religion, and agriculture. This aroused the envy of his elder brother Set.

The jealous Set decided to take revenge upon his brother --- he wanted both his glory and his wife. According to one of the early versions of the legend, Set lured Osiris into the field and killed him there.

Set was regarded as a warrior god with burning red eyes, the only one capable of defeating the serpent Apep in the darkness, who embodied the dark and sought to imprison Ra in the dark depths of the subterranean Nile.

He was originally venerated as the "protector of the sun-Ra," patron of royal power, and his name was incorporated into the titles and names of several pharaohs.

According to ancient mythology, Nephthys fell in love with Osiris and conceived his son, Anubis. Other versions hold that after the death of Osiris, Nephthys became the wife of Set --- who was also known as Ra.

Fearing Set's wrath, Nephthys abandoned the infant in the reed thickets, where Isis found him with the help of dogs.

Later versions report that Set killed Osiris not once but several times. At one of the feasts, Set had a magnificent sarcophagus brought in and promised to give it to whoever it fitted exactly. As soon as Osiris lay down inside the sarcophagus, the lid was slammed shut, nailed down, and thrown into the Nile.

Hearing of her beloved's murder, Isis set out to find Osiris. Isis found the sarcophagus and saved Osiris --- he was resurrected, and she conceived his son, Horus.

But Set did not stop there: he hacked his brother's body into fourteen pieces and scattered them across the Delta. The scattering of the body parts of the god Osiris is linked to the belief that the stars are fragments of the dead sun.

Anubis helped the goddess Isis, wife of Osiris, to gather the parts of his body dismembered by his brother, the envious Set. In the era of the Old Kingdom, Anubis was venerated as the god of the dead; he was called "Khentimentiu," meaning "he who is foremost of the western land, or kingdom of the dead," and also lord of "Rosetau" --- standing before the palace of the gods.

Anubis was depicted as a reclining guard-jackal, or the dog Sab, or as a man with the head of a jackal. In the kingdom of the dead, Anubis was originally regarded as the most important figure, while the god Osiris embodied only the dead pharaoh. But in time the god Osiris, whose cult was greatly elevated by the priests, took over the royal functions of Anubis, who became merely Osiris's assistant, occupied with the performance of various mysteries and funerary rites. Anubis prepared the body for mummification and transformed it into a mummy, for which reason he was also venerated as the god of embalming. He laid his hands upon the mummy and by means of magic transformed the dead person into an "akh" --- that is, into an illuminated, a blessed soul. In the burial chamber, Anubis placed around the mummy the children of the sun god Horus, patrons of the pharaohs, and gave each of them a canopic jar containing the innards of the deceased.

In the era of the New Kingdom, when the death of Osiris was linked to the annual flooding of the Nile, the river's waters were regarded as the tears of Isis or as the bodily fluids of Osiris. Osiris was seen as the life-giving force, the righteous ruler who followed the principles of Ma'at (justice), while the opposing Set embodied chaos and cruelty. In this sense, the myth of Osiris and Set symbolises the struggle between order and disorder, life and death.

Genghis Khan --- Temujin

Legend has it that he came into the world clutching a clot of blood in his right hand. His mother had been abducted by his father and forced to marry him. In those days the numerous nomadic tribes of the Central Asian steppe were in constant warfare and raiding one another, and Temujin's life was wild and unpredictable. Before he had reached the age of ten, a hostile clan poisoned his father. Shortly afterwards, his own clan abandoned Temujin, his mother, and his six brothers and sisters, unwilling to bear responsibility for them.

Temujin then killed his elder half-brother and became the head of his impoverished family. At some point he was captured and taken prisoner by the very clan that had once abandoned them, but in the end he managed to escape. In 1178, Temujin married Börte, with whom he had four sons and an unknown number of daughters. When Börte too was abducted, he organised a daring rescue of his wife and soon began forging alliances, earning a reputation as a warrior and attracting an ever-growing number of followers.

Genghis Khan killed his brother Bekter because the latter refused to share food with him. Out on a hunt, they had quarrelled over a fish.

Genghis Khan's real name, given to him at birth, was Temujin. This was also the name of the chieftain his father had killed.

After her husband's death, Genghis Khan's mother was expelled from the clan along with her seven children and raised them alone. Times were extremely difficult for her. And it was over such an apparently trivial grievance that he and his brother Khasar committed this act of violence.

According to the Secret History of the Mongols, when Temujin and his brother Khasar saw Bekter sitting on a hilltop watching over the horses, they crept up on him from two sides --- one from the front, the other from behind. Bekter noticed them only when they were already aiming their bows at him. Bekter attempted to calm his half-brothers, but seeing their determination, he addressed them with a final plea --- to spare his brother Belgutei --- then submissively sank to his knees and was killed without mercy.

The killing of Bekter turned Temujin into a criminal. A detachment of warriors was sent to seize Temujin and bring him to the main camp of the Tayichi'uts, where the young criminal --- Temujin was only thirteen --- was locked into a wooden cangue and forced to perform hard labour. At the age of fifteen, Genghis Khan was captured and escaped, which later brought him renown.

The Mongol Empire became the largest contiguous state in history. It stretched from the Pacific Ocean to Eastern Europe. Genghis Khan created the Mongol Empire by

uniting disparate tribes from China to Russia. According to some researchers, Genghis Khan was responsible for the deaths of more than 40 million people.

Many peoples swore allegiance to Temujin, and he became their ruler --- their Khan. He then changed his name to Chinggis, meaning "true" (or "just").

Romulus and Remus

The legend of how Romulus killed his brother Remus differs somewhat from the preceding stories.

Numitor was overthrown by his younger brother Amulius, who compelled Rhea Silvia to become one of the Vestal priestesses (and thus to take a vow of chastity), so that she would have no children who could lay claim to the throne. Nevertheless, Rhea gave birth to the twins Romulus and Remus, whose father was Mars, the god of war.

Amulius ordered the newborns to be drowned in the Tiber, but the basket in which they had been placed floated downstream and came to rest at the site of what would become Rome, by the Ficus ruminalis --- a sacred tree remembered for the events that followed. There a she-wolf and a woodpecker --- both sacred animals of Mars --- fed and raised the twins until they were found by the shepherd Faustulus. Raised by Faustulus and his wife Acca Larentia, the brothers eventually became leaders of a band of bold young men and in the end killed Amulius, restoring the throne to their grandfather.

Afterwards they founded a city on the very spot where they had been saved. When Romulus was building the city wall, Remus leapt over it --- and was killed by his brother for doing so.

According to tradition, Rome was founded by the twin brothers Romulus and Remus, sons of Rhea Silvia and the god Mars. Their mother, daughter of King Numitor who had been deposed by his brother Amulius, bore children by the god Mars.

King Amulius, fearing reprisals, ordered the twins to be cast into the Tiber.

But his servants disobeyed the order and let the basket with the twins float away with the current. The basket was washed ashore and the infants found themselves at the Palatine Hill, where a she-wolf discovered them and suckled them with her milk.

Romulus and Remus were raised by a shepherd; eventually they settled in Alba Longa.

The brothers grew up, killed Amulius, and restored the throne to their grandfather. They achieved their ambition of founding a city --- Rome. But they could not agree on the exact location: Romulus chose the Palatine Hill, while Remus preferred the Aventine. They appealed to the gods and received an answer --- to wait for a sign, each on the place he had chosen. It is said that Romulus saw twelve white eagles, while Remus saw only six. A quarrel broke out.

Romulus killed his brother Remus and began laying out the city on the Palatine.

Romulus immediately found himself facing a shortage of women of childbearing age in the new city. He resolved this problem by inviting the local tribes to a festival, including the Sabines, and abducting their young women. This legend inspired numerous famous works of art on the theme of the Rape of the Sabine Women. According to the account of Livy, Romulus managed to make peace with the Sabines following the abduction of their daughters, and for a time ruled jointly with their king Titus Tatius. He extended the city to include the Aventine and Capitoline hills, founded the Senate, introduced a calendar, and created the Roman army. He was spoken of sometimes as a good ruler and sometimes as a cruel tyrant murdered in the Senate; but according to traditional legend, during a storm he ascended to the heavens in a thick cloud and became a god, after which he returned and declared that "by the will of the gods, Rome shall be the capital of the world," before ascending once more. This rock has not survived in modern Rome. Romulus and Remus climbed the mountain; the hill before them was wild and silent.

Romulus said: "Here shall be a city."

"The city shall be like the sun," replied Remus.

Romulus said: "By the will of the constellations we have recovered our ancient honour."

Remus replied: "What was before, we must forget --- let us look to the future."

"Here shall be a circus," said Romulus, "and here --- our home, open to all."

"But we must place the tombs closer to the house," replied Remus.

Augustine draws a parallel between Cain the fratricide and Romulus the fratricide, one of whom founded the first city in the world, the other the greatest city in the world: this is how earthly cities are built --- upon blood.

Since the legend of the rivalry between Remus and Romulus took shape in the Trastevere region in connection with the site and tomb of Remus, not far from the grove of the Arval Brethren, this sheds new light on the legend concerning the origin of the Arval college. And here Romulus, taken in by Acca Larentia to replace one of her twelve sons, appears primarily as merely an ancestor of the Romuliani of Trastevere.

The introduction of the name of a local patrician ancestor into a plebeian legend can be explained by the ordinary desire of the conquered local inhabitants to elevate and ennoble their political past through mythological kinship with their masters.

The acknowledgement of both rivals as brothers can be explained by the same source, which is all the more fitting since the motif of two hostile brothers recurs in countless variations and tales among all peoples.

They became twins only through the plot of Diocles.

Empires of the Near East

Fratricide is one of the most terrible crimes a person can conceive of; in ancient times, when one person wanted to subjugate another, people sought the lowest possible means of acquiring power. The history of the Ottoman Empire can serve as

a striking example of fratricide. On 26 May 1566, the future Sultan Murad and Safiye Sultan had a son named Mehmed, who inherited the throne and became the thirteenth sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Mehmed III became sultan at the age of twenty-nine.

When the ruler of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed II, legalised fratricide, this tradition took deep root in the ruling dynasty --- brothers killed one another for the throne. Worst of all, the most terrible instance of fratricide was Sultan Mehmed III's execution of all nineteen of his brothers and half-brothers, who were buried alongside their father --- simply so that no rivals would remain to contest his throne.

People become dangerous when they seek power and might --- and go to extremes in pursuit of it.

Without question, fratricide is one of the most controversial topics in the history of the Ottoman Empire. The Law of Governance of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror granted his son the right to execute male members of the ruling dynasty in order to avoid an interregnum. Throughout the history of the empire there existed various treatises devoted to fratricide, and most instances were considered legitimate, although certain executions carried out to prevent possible rebellion were condemned as unwarranted.

The custom that "the empire is the common property of the dynasty," rooted in the ancient Turkic political tradition, survived even after the adoption of Islam. Some Turkic rulers preferred to divide their country into regions and entrust their administration to their sons, in order to avoid civil war. However, such a practice weakened the state and prepared the ground for its ruin. Fortunately, the Ottomans learned from this experience.

Yet they sacrificed themselves --- for their subjects, not for the state --- and drank the bitter poison themselves. That bitter poison was the killing of members of the ruling dynasty for the welfare of the people --- that is, fratricide. In a letter to the son of Timur, Mehmed I Çelebi, the fourth ruler of the Ottomans, it was written: "My predecessors dealt with some hardships through their experience. Two rulers cannot live in one country." The execution of members of the ruling dynasty for political reasons was not confined to the Ottomans. The Romans, the Sassanids, the Byzantines, and even the Muslim states of Andalusia acted in the same way.

Nevertheless, the primary cause of this practice in these states was the desire to seize the throne, not the protection of the unity of the state and the labour of the people. On the other hand, one must also bear in mind the great many people who perished in the prolonged wars of succession in Europe. It is known that the first death sentence within a ruling dynasty was carried out by Osman Gazi, the founder of the Ottoman state, in 1298 --- against his own uncle, Dündar Bey, who had acted in his own interests and collaborated with Byzantine feudal lords.

In the first few centuries, members of the ruling dynasty became a problem for the state under almost every ruler.

The şehzades (the sultan's sons, the princes) who laid claim to the throne would raise rebellions, receiving support from other states or even from the Byzantines and the Anatolian principalities. After the Battle of Ankara (1402), in which the Ottomans were defeated, the state fell into anarchy, and the four şehzades of

Bayezid I, each with a multitude of supporters, fought for the throne for years. By the end of this civil war, Mehmed I Çelebi, the youngest son of the ruler, had defeated his brothers and in 1413 became the first sole ruler of the Ottoman imperial throne.

Among the Ottomans, within the framework of the old Turkic political tradition, there was no strict order of succession. Upon reaching the age of twelve, each şehzade was sent to a sancak (an administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire) at an equal distance from the capital. There they underwent a kind of apprenticeship, and the şehzade who was first to arrive in the capital after the death of his father became the ruler. Nevertheless, the famous clause from the Law of Governance of Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror reads: "Whichever of my sons ascends the throne, it is fitting for him to execute his brothers for the general welfare of the people.

Most of the ulema approved of this; let it be done accordingly." This law did not establish a new order of succession, but rather consolidated the principle that the throne should go to the most fortunate and strongest şehzade, who could eliminate his brother who also laid claim to the throne. In this way, the principle of the inviolability of power in Islamic law was adopted by Ottoman politics, even if this cost the lives of members of the ruling dynasty. In the end, civil law enshrined the execution of şehzades in accordance with the Code of Sultan Mehmed II. As in any other state, the ruler wielded lawful authority within the framework of Islamic law. There were three primary reasons for the execution of a şehzade in the Ottoman dynasty. First, a şehzade was executed if he raised a rebellion to seize the throne.

An attempt at a coup is considered a crime throughout the world.

After the death of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror of the Ottoman Empire in 1481, his younger son, Cem Sultan, sent his elder brother Bayezid, the next Ottoman sultan, a message proposing that the country be divided between them. Ruler Bayezid II rejected this proposal. He defeated his brother, and Cem Sultan fled to Europe, where he spent the rest of his life in wretched captivity. Some legal scholars maintain that the execution could be imposed as punishment upon a şehzade if he had completed preparations for a rebellion against the ruler. Second, there might be no overt attempt at rebellion...

The transfer of power to another person or dynasty outside this lineage was almost never considered. During military rebellions, the ruler was often subjected to threats, with one of the şehzades being elevated to the throne. The impoverished şehzades became a potential danger threatening the state and the security of the country. Ottoman Sultan Murad IV sacrificed his entirely innocent brother in order to suppress unrest, since the army wished to place his brother on the throne. The Austrian ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, who was present in the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Suleiman I, said: "To be the son of [an Ottoman] ruler is truly something unfortunate. For when one of them occupies the throne, the rest thereafter merely await their death. While the brother of the ruler is alive, the demands of the army will never end. When the ruler refuses them this demand, they cry out: 'God save your brother,' thereby expressing their desire to place him on the throne." Some modern scholars consider that the executions of şehzades who had not attempted any rebellions were unlawful acts of arbitrary power, contrary to the norms of sharia.

On 26 May 1566, the future Sultan Murad and Safiye Sultan had a son named Mehmed, who inherited the throne and became the thirteenth sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Mehmed III became sultan at the age of twenty-nine.

Even now, studying the biography of Mehmed, "one's hair stands on end." One can imagine what witnesses to those events felt. In order for Mehmed III to reign for the rest of his life without fear, the entire empire was plunged into grief, tears, and pain. But it was not only the young şehzades who perished --- the pregnant concubines died too.

His very first act was a horrifying command --- to execute all nineteen of his brothers.

One of the şehzades condemned to death requested a meeting with his elder brother. But his entreaties and pleas were coldly rejected. All were executed by mute executioners. They were buried in the garden of Hagia Sophia, alongside their father.

But these deaths were not enough for the newly crowned sultan. After his father Murad III, numerous pregnant wives remained. And immediately after his death, two boys were born, who were at once taken from their mothers and drowned.

In those times no one could predict what sex a child in the womb would be, so Mehmed decided to take no chances and rid himself of all the women. Most sadly of all, some historians believe that among the dozens executed were not only the sons of Murad but his daughters too. By Mehmed's order, ten more pregnant concubines of the late Sultan Murad were drowned, since they posed a threat to the new sultan.

But the war continued within the family itself. Sultan Mehmed ordered the execution of his son Selim. According to one version, Selim openly refused to obey his father. But Turkish sources fall strangely silent on this matter. Therefore nothing certain can be said about the real reason for the execution of Şehzade Selim.

Sultan Mehmed III died on 21 December 1603. At the age of thirty-eight he suffered a heart attack. His reign lasted almost nine years.

The Ottoman throne was inherited by his son, Sultan Ahmed I, who was at that point only thirteen years and eight months old.

The punishment of an innocent person out of fear of a possible future crime is unlawful according to the principle that "a person is presumed innocent until their guilt is proved by law." Those who consider the executions of the şehzades lawful base their position on the principle of "maslaha" (public interest) in Islamic law. "Maslaha" means that the public welfare takes precedence over private interest when resolving a given question. The Quran indicates that fitna (discord, social upheaval) is worse than the killing of a person. For example, Ottoman Sultan Osman II ordered the execution of his brother before setting out for the Battle of Khotin, in order to prevent a possible rebellion in his absence.

This bears a great resemblance to Hitler in Germany: when Hitler wanted to be rid of Black people and Jews, he attacked them and almost completely destroyed them, in order to achieve his goal that "the land should belong only to Germans." A great many people were killed in this period; the aim at the time was to completely eliminate any influence of the Jewish community and of outsiders, and the socio-

political goal was the implementation of "racial or anti-Jewish policy." This power can be both a blessing and a dangerous force. It is impossible to predict in advance how precisely those who possess it will choose to use it.

Western Kingdoms

Artemisia was the first female naval commander known to history, and had King Xerxes followed her strategic counsel, Persia might well have conquered Greece, and the subsequent path of what we today call western civilisation could have turned in an entirely different direction. In an era and culture where women were barely visible in public life, Artemisia was unique.

Named after Artemis, the goddess of the hunt, Artemisia was Queen of Halicarnassus in the fifth century BC --- a vast realm situated on the territory of modern Turkey, in a region once known as Caria. However, she became best known as a naval commander and ally of the Persian king Xerxes in his full-scale invasion of the Greek city-states. (Yes, exactly as depicted in the film 300: Rise of an Empire.)

She made her name at the Battle of Salamis, where the fleet she commanded with such skill was considered the finest among the Carian ships. The Greek historian Herodotus described her exploits in detail on this sea battlefield --- in the Persian Gulf --- and portrayed her as a warrior who acted with decisiveness and remarkable cunning in her strategies aimed at holding on to power. This included a merciless, brutal instinct for self-preservation. When a Greek ship was pursuing hers, Artemisia deliberately rammed another Persian vessel in order to deceive the Greek warrior into thinking he was looking at one of his own. Fortunately, the ruse succeeded.

The Greek left her alone. The Persian vessel sank, and its crew drowned in the sea.

Watching from a distance on the shore, Xerxes saw this violent collision and concluded that Artemisia had sunk a Greek ship --- not one of her own.

Despite this role in history, the queen's death was not described as a glorious end on a great battlefield, but was preserved instead in a sad and misogynistic legend. It is also said that Artemisia fell desperately in love with a young man who deliberately ignored her, much to her misfortune. Blinded by this insatiable love, she quite literally blinded him in his sleep. And yet, even after she had mutilated him, her passion for him flared up with renewed force. To cure herself of this feeling, she decided to leap from a high cliff at Leucade in Greece --- it was believed that this leap was capable of severing the bonds of love in any person who was smitten. But instead of a cure, it broke Artemisia's neck. It is said that after her death she was buried somewhere nearby.

* * *

When it comes to the British royal family, it is known not only for its magnificence and glory but is equally notorious for the long-standing family dramas and conflicts that visibly influenced its reign. Despite the fact that the British monarchy maintained an impeccable outward gloss for centuries, it always had its trials and upheavals. From quarrels between royal spouses to the rivalry of knight-brothers for

the throne --- the royal family has seen everything. And there is no denying it: here are some of the most remarkable disputes in the history of the British royal family.

Princess Matilda versus the knight-brothers and the people. This brings us to the story of an old royal family feud that began in 1126, when King Henry I appointed his daughter Matilda as heir to the thrones of England and Normandy.

Matilda was born to Edith, daughter of King Malcolm III of Scotland, two years after her father Henry I ascended the English throne following the death of his brother William Rufus.

After the death of her husband, Emperor Henry, in 1125, Matilda returned to England, and her father then commanded his Anglo-Norman nobles to swear that they would support his daughter as heir to the throne if he died without leaving a male heir.

The very idea of a woman on the throne seemed something weak and alien to the people at the time, and certain knight-brothers who were fighting for power and for the recognition of the people not only alarmed the subjects but also led to a civil war after the king's death that lasted approximately nineteen years and several months. In the end, however, the turmoil was resolved by means of a peace treaty.

After several years of her father's rule, Matilda died in September and was buried at Bec Abbey in Normandy. Her epitaph reads: "Great by birth, still greater by marriage, but greatest of all in her posterity --- here rests the daughter, wife, and mother of Henry."

* * *

"The big fish eats the small" and "the strongest survives" --- such is the order of things. The strong rule the weak. Rulers hold sway over the masses. And then the rulers themselves wage internal struggles and weave political intrigues --- and they can afford to do this only thanks to their power and their position in the hierarchy. The hierarchy is a system in which...

This may be connected to the fact that the world is so hierarchically structured that it is possible to survive in it only by possessing power.

And this also means that power is necessary for survival. This is a well-known fact before which even rulers and members of noble families bow. They know that they must have no weaknesses --- especially in their pursuit of power.

A typical member of a royal family is also aware of the significance of power. In former times, rivalry was considered something beneficial among the nobility. In the struggle for power, many members of royal families entered into conflicts that generated a great deal of unrest and rivalry among them. This, combined with the need to acquire power and thereby earn respect, led to the killing of as many people as possible. The victor could obtain everything --- any state and any territory.

At least six out of ten rulers came to power by eliminating certain people. This happened because even when they were suspected of involvement in certain killings, they could not be punished (or held to account), since there was no real

evidence. And even when evidence did exist, the power they possessed allowed them to manipulate it or frame others.

Those who possessed power often sought to eliminate members of the royal family --- in order to reduce the threat they posed and to erase any signs of their own weakness. Sometimes the victors turned out to be entirely unexpected individuals. It was difficult to predict who would ultimately become the dominant figure.

The problem lay not so much in whether to kill or not to kill, but in where to draw the line in these killings --- for the goal was to kill as many people as possible and obtain as much advantage as possible. The trouble, of course, is that as soon as we place someone in a central position in the decision-making network, we thereby endow them with enormous structural power, and they may --- and often will --- attempt to convert it into more destructive forms of power: the ability to command others and to appropriate a disproportionately large share of resources. If leaders are not subject to effective oversight, hierarchy generates inequality. Sociologists even have a name for this --- the "iron law of oligarchy."

Thus, hierarchy in its negative sense is the unequal distribution of power. And members of noble families often serve as examples of the abuse of power. The idea of killing for power is not something royal family members particularly pride themselves on today. Yet there is nothing surprising about this, especially in a world where people are constantly striving for power.

For more than ninety percent of our evolutionary history, people lived in small groups. Reaching agreement on a common plan of action for the achievement of shared goals was relatively easy. In a small group of ten people or fewer, it is quite possible to reach consensus simply by discussing things together, listening to each person's concerns, and not allowing anyone to single-handedly control the decision-making process. Throughout history, attempts to consciously build large organisations or societies without hierarchy have invariably failed catastrophically. The only real way for large groups of people to reach a shared decision is to construct a structure of interpersonal connections.

Genocide

The most significant killings are mass killings provoked by irreconcilable circumstances, family feuds, and political wars that cause genuine physical or mental harm to members of a group, deliberately create conditions of life calculated to bring about its total or partial destruction, prevent childbearing, or forcibly transfer children from one group to another. People were killed to establish power and strengthen influence in a region --- usually targeting a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, wholly or in part.

In essence, every war is a genocide that, over time, years later, as a result of the strategy of the supreme authority and of former rule, slowly but surely leaves its mark and negatively affects subsequent events and society.

Wars and genocide have undoubtedly exerted a global influence on the gene pool of peoples and of humanity as a whole. This is visible in the external characteristics of almost all people.

Every person dies, but not every person kills. Death is merely a matter of time.

Who can decide when the appropriate time to die has come --- God or the angels?

Who is strong enough to take upon themselves the responsibility of killing --- predators or maniacs?

Individual killings resemble micro-genocide; the human species has experienced genocide since its very emergence, and not all survived --- and not always the best or the strongest; sometimes the most cunning and deceitful. The weak surrendered or submitted, thereby prolonging their lives and continuing their lineage. This is precisely how genetic errors and pathologies developed.

The population of humanity temporarily declined, but then grew again. People fell in love with one another, but they had relatively little choice and freedom of decision. This is what shaped society as we see it today --- not the noblest and not the healthiest.

Human societies were shaped artificially, under the influence of financial, economic, and military pressures.

A sad and tragic outcome. For most women were compelled to marry because of economic difficulties, social conventions, age, or debts. Unnatural selection must also be taken into account. This seems a more probable fate than the evolution described in textbooks. Genetic engineering alters reality and influences evolution.

This is difficult to assess, because the situation is getting out of control. But fate and religion are capable of changing a person more than anything else.

Perhaps this is precisely why many people feel unnatural. It is hard to speak of biological instincts or needs, since there exist numerous artificial factors that do not reflect the true, genuine behaviour of people.

Among the most significant examples of mass killings in history are the Holocaust, the Uyghur genocide, and the massacre in Rwanda. The word "extermination" has also come to carry an evaluative meaning, since it is generally regarded as the embodiment of human cruelty.

As a rule, extermination does not imply the immediate destruction of an entire people --- except in cases where this is achieved through the mass killing of all members of that people. Rather, it refers to an organised system of various actions aimed at destroying the foundations of the existence of social groups --- with the goal of destroying those groups themselves.

The targets of such a scheme are the political and social institutions, culture, language, public sentiment, religion, and economic existence of social groups, as well as the undermining of the personal security, freedom, wellbeing, dignity, and even the very lives of the people who belong to these groups.

Genocide and war as a means of controlling population numbers are more a predestined fate than an evolutionary path. Genetic engineering is akin to altering reality itself. It influences evolution, but steering it in the right direction is difficult. Especially when members of royal families begin to use genetic engineering to prolong their own existence and suppress civil society. Why is a president's long

rule associated with corruption and oligarchy, while a monarch's lifetime rule is considered merely the cultural tradition of the people?!

Homeostasis is the property of a living organism to carry out activity directed at maintaining the constancy of its internal environment. If a system is incapable of restoring its equilibrium, it may in time cease to function. The term "homeostasis" is most commonly used in biology. The human body must maintain homeostasis in order to preserve stability and continue to exist. It needs not only to strive to survive but also to adapt to changes in the surrounding environment and to develop. The ability of the body to sustain life is influenced by various factors. Since these parameters influence the chemical reactions that sustain life in the organism, it is endowed with physiological mechanisms that keep them at the required level.

The maintenance of constancy of the cell's internal environment (homeostasis) is achieved through the feedback of the autonomic nervous system. And although it operates autonomously --- meaning that the switching off of consciousness does not cause it to cease functioning --- it responds to the slightest changes in the functioning of the central nervous system. It can be called the "wise companion" of the central nervous system. It follows that mental and emotional activity is also work, demanding additional expenditure of energy from the cells of the brain and other organs.

Population homeostasis is the ability of a population over a long period of time to maintain a certain number of individuals. This is the most natural, healthy, and correct means of population control. For every population in nature has its own equilibrium, and the struggle for survival only complicates this programme.

From conception to death --- that is how life is arranged!

CONCEPTION IS THE TRIGGER OF LIFE. DEATH IS THE BIOLOGICAL CONCLUSION.

When and how conception occurs influences the whole of subsequent life; many character traits have their origins in the sexual sphere. In order to regulate this factor, numerous cultural rites, traditions, and rules were created. Yet it is difficult to predict what a person will truly want and what they will choose. Whether they will submit to the rules or break them. How to raise a person so that they can realise all their aspirations through life and character. People place greater emphasis on upbringing and discipline than on the sexual factor, trying to turn a blind eye to sexual potential and see only the natural beauty and intelligence of the small person.

Human culture shows what it wishes to show: certain standards of appearance and behaviour. The assertion that beneath clothing everyone is the same is not entirely objective. Some people simply never give it a thought. But others experience genuine despair over the shape of the body and the sexual aspects of living beings.

Such people are few, but enough to provoke chaos and problems.

There must exist many different ways to plan and organise the sexual act with the aim of conceiving a child, where both roles --- male and female --- are valued, complex, and can be regulated so as to create new life under the best possible conditions and practices.

This new life could be different --- with default instincts, high intelligence, good karma. Because at the moment of conception all instincts will be under control, and many genetic and karmic errors will be capable of being corrected.

This could become one of the means of preventing the birth of psychopaths and maniacs.

To improve predators and find the correct equilibrium in nature.

Predators and the World

Since all living organisms require food energy to survive, the selective pressure associated with the need to eat without being eaten plays a fundamental role in the evolutionary adaptation of an animal to the environment in which it lives. However, the excessive success of a predator threatens the very existence of its prey population, which in turn undermines the predator's own survival.

The animal kingdom is absolutely uncompromising. Predators kill to survive --- this is embedded in their nature. A whole range of neural mechanisms underlies this primal connection. Moreover, phases of sexual aggression transform animals into predators. This instinct ensures the safety of families and packs.

In some animal species the females are more aggressive; in others, the males. They protect themselves, they hunt in order to survive and grow.

Predatory behaviour often becomes one of the drivers of mutations within an ecosystem or a living species. Predators develop special skills to hunt their prey, while prey in turn develops special means of defence.

But predation is not a fixed concept, nor a permanent trait forever assigned to animals: it is cyclical and can change depending on external and internal factors. For example, on the abundance or, conversely, the shortage of resources.

Nature is definitely not "merciful" when it comes to predation! Predation is a complex and cyclical concept, but it is inseparably linked to natural selection, in which strong predators devour weak herbivores. Predators (in particular, carnivores) often hunt the most vulnerable individuals.

This means that young, weak, or sick individuals typically become the targets of predators, since they lack the evolutionarily acquired skills to escape a predator's grasp, or are unable to employ them --- which ensures that healthy individuals are more likely to reproduce and pass on their genes to offspring.

The predator in turn develops traits that counteract these new changes, and the cycle continues. The predator obtains the necessary nutrients, while the surviving prey learns to avoid such predators, which ensures the long-term survival of the species. These biological interactions form the very essence of predation.

These interactions are cyclical. If the number of prey declines, the number of hunters declines too. When the number of predators decreases, the prey population begins to grow, which means that hunters have more food.

The danger of invasive predators

Not all predation is part of a "natural," cyclical process in which the predator and prey more or less balance one another's presence. In some cases, predators become excessively skilled at what they do, driving other species to the brink of extinction and even to complete annihilation.

Feral cats, dogs, pigs, marsupials, opossums, mice, the small Indian mongoose, and the red fox are among the main culprits in this category. Feral cats alone are associated with the extinction of 63 species and the endangerment of more than 400.

It is usually birds, lizards, and mammals that face the greatest threat. In a fragile, isolated habitat, wildlife adapts to each of its inhabitants.

When a new species appears (typically through the agency of humans), it causes chaos, since the local biodiversity has no notable defence against foreign predators.

As habitats continue to change and population numbers shift, some animals find themselves facing a shortage of food. Under such conditions, the eating of meat (in the case of herbivores) becomes an increasingly pressing necessity.

Can animals change their diet?

The answer is not simple. There are different types of diet --- in carnivores, herbivores, and all the intermediate species. A change in the environment in which an animal lives can alter its diet as well. It is clear that worms and rats living underground are capable of eating whatever comes their way, since their omnivorous nature allows them to survive in very different conditions.

An animal's diet is not fixed forever. Herbivores can eat meat if this is necessary for survival, especially in harsh conditions. But cases have been observed of herbivores, such as deer or cattle, occasionally eating meat even without any real necessity for doing so.

But can a herbivore completely transform into a carnivore? Or vice versa? Given sufficient time --- yes. Depending on evolutionary changes, the diet of an ancestor may differ greatly from that of its current descendants centuries later.

For example, the ancestor of bears was most likely an omnivore, but over the past centuries several species have separated from the line, including the giant panda, which is known for its insatiable herbivorous appetite.

Whales, dolphins, and hippopotamuses most likely share a common ancestor, since they belong to the same order (Cetacea). And yet their diets differ strikingly. Herbivorous bees descended from carnivorous wasps.

Nectar-feeding birds, for example, occasionally eat ants or other small insects. On the whole, such food is not very rich in protein, but contains certain specially needed nutrients (such as vitamin B12).

From an evolutionary standpoint, omnivores have an advantage, since they are capable of adapting more quickly to different conditions, as they can obtain the necessary nutrients from both plants (seeds and fruits) and meat. Omnivorous behaviour can also develop in environments with few nutrients. Our ancestors are a wonderful example: they transitioned from an exclusively plant-based diet to a more omnivorous one when they realised that fruits were becoming scarce and that

meat provided other necessary nutrients. This was vital for human ancestors, whose brains, muscles, and digestive tracts were growing ever larger and more complex.

Which also led to vitamin deficiencies and various diseases.

Under conditions of nutrient shortage, the instincts of adaptation and survival are activated.

It is important to distinguish between "true" omnivores (such as humans) and omnivorous behaviour --- for example, zoopharmacognosy: when animals eat plants for "self-medication."

Predatory animals do not naturally transform into peaceful herbivores because of health problems. Herbivores and carnivores, by contrast, are generally highly specialised creatures evolving within their ecological niches and acquiring survival traits adapted exclusively to their environment. If their ecological niche changes for any reason, this can have serious consequences for them.

This is admirably illustrated by the numerous species on the brink of extinction whose habitats have been damaged or disrupted as a consequence of human activity (deforestation, rapid climate change, the appearance of new species, and so on).

Nevertheless, it is easier for an animal to adapt if its diet is sufficiently varied. And again, bears serve as a useful example: they are very different from one another. The polar bear has a strictly carnivorous diet --- due to the absence of fruits or seeds in the inhospitable Arctic tundra. At the same time, the brown or black bear can feed on seeds and, occasionally, meat (a predominantly plant-based diet).

It is quite possible that in conditions of a changing environment and the appearance of new species, other species developed various types of diet --- depending on the quantity and variety of available resources.

How does an animal determine whether an approaching member of another species is a potential predator or a source of food?

One cannot help but marvel at the remarkable variety with which evolution has produced adaptive neurobiological solutions for the delicate balance between predator and prey in their endless struggle for survival.

The "arms race" involves continuously escalating improvements in both attack and defence. However, these adaptations come at a cost: for example, longer legs increase the risk of fractures, while the chameleon's specialised tongue, capable of operating like a projectile, is useless for lapping up water --- so the chameleon must drink dew from plants.

Predators and prey are natural enemies, and many of their adaptations appear to be directed against one another. For example, bats have developed complex echolocation systems for detecting insects and other prey, while insects have evolved a range of defence mechanisms, including the ability to hear echolocation signals. However, the principle of "life versus dinner" predicts that this "arms race" is asymmetric: if a predator fails to catch its prey, it merely loses its meal, whereas if it succeeds --- the prey loses its life.

The degree of this asymmetry in natural selection depends in part on the heritability of adaptive traits. Moreover, if a predator loses too many "dinners," it may itself lose its life. On the other hand, the cost of a specific missed "dinner" is unpredictable, since the predator can quickly find better prey. In addition, most predators are generalists, which reduces the influence of a specific prey adaptation on the predator itself.

The parasitic emerald jewel wasp also injects a cocktail of peptide neurotoxins into its sacrificial cockroach, but in this case the sting is aimed at a strictly specific area of the brain. The "beauty" of this precision is that instead of killing the prey immediately, the targeted poisoning turns the much larger cockroach into a submissive zombie, which can then be led --- walking of its own accord --- back to the wasp's nest as a still-living food source for itself and its larvae.

Both predator and prey. Emotional arousal in the face of threat and reward.

Studies on animals show that the responses of the brain and reflexes change in a predictable fashion depending on the proximity of threatening signals. When a prey animal notices a predator at a distance, the limbic structures of its brain trigger a whole range of defensive reactions, including the inhibition of motor activity, focused attention on the threat, and a slowing of the heart rate (the so-called "fear bradycardia"; Campbell, Wood, and McBride, 1997); as the predator approaches, these reactions intensify. Studying conditioned fear, Fanselow (1994) found that the initial motor "freezing" depends on projections from the amygdala to the ventral central grey matter of the brain, while Kapp, Whalen, Supple, and Pascoe (1992) established that the bradycardia triggered by a fear signal correlates closely with the activity of amygdaloid cells. Further understanding of this defensive circuit was provided by M. Davis (1998), who demonstrated that frightened animals show an increased response to sudden stimuli presented during conditioned fear signals --- a response also mediated by projections from the amygdala.

As the distance to the predator continues to shrink, prey animals mobilise more actively for action. This "anxiety" response (Masterson and Crawford, 1982) includes even greater vigilance, sympathetic activation of glands and smooth muscle, redirection of blood to the large muscles, and an increase in heart rate.

Upon direct confrontation (in the so-called "attack zone"), the prey switches to active defence (fight or flight), for which the dorsal central grey matter is responsible (Fanselow, 1994).

The reactions of the pursuing predator resemble those of the fearful prey anticipating an encounter --- both in the initial inhibition of movement and heightened vigilance, and in the physiological mobilisation as it approaches; when the predator closes in on the attack zone, instead of "fight or flight," the final swift dash to seize the prey occurs. Moreover, studies of anticipated reward have revealed that many of the same brain structures activated during defence (for example, the amygdala; Zald, 2003) are engaged here too, alongside other structures (for example, the nucleus accumbens and the medial prefrontal cortex; see Schultz, 2000), which may be unique to the reward mechanism.

When motivational signals were only just appearing and were far from the immediate signal to act, the emotional responses were typical of those observed during the free viewing of arousing pleasant and unpleasant images.

The same logic is traceable at the level of the individual cell: neurons transmit signals by the same principle of ionic polarisation of the membrane as was described in the "Zombies" chapter, and the entire nervous system of an animal, however complex, rests upon just three components.

A communication system requires three components: a collector of external information, an integrator that evaluates this information and determines its significance, and a transmitter that conveys the decision to the motor organ. In animals, the sense organs and nerves --- the eyes, for example --- collect information; associative nerves, generally concentrated in the brain, integrate, evaluate, and determine its significance; while efferent, or motor, nerves convey decisions to the muscles or other organs. Although all three components of the nervous system developed alongside the increasing size and complexity of animals, even the simplest systems found in animals (such as sponges and cnidarians) are capable of complex, coordinated actions. Both ends of the bipolar neuron of a cnidarian are capable of both receiving and transmitting an impulse, whereas the unipolar neurons of more developed animals receive a signal only from one end (the dendrite) and transmit from the other (the axon). A single neuron may have several dendrites and axons.

The nervous system uses the transmission properties of neurons for communication. Within a single neuron, the propagation of an impulse in the form of an ionic wave can occur extremely rapidly, but this wave can travel only along the membrane of a single cell. To pass to the next cell across the synapse, where the axon meets the dendrite, a chemical transmitter is required. This molecule diffuses to the dendrites of the neighbouring neuron, where it triggers an ionic wave that propagates along the entire cell membrane. Although chemical transmission is significantly slower than an ionic wave, it is more flexible. Learning, for example, partly consists of increasing the sensitivity of a specific neural pathway to a stimulus. The sensitivity of the synapse can be altered by increasing the amount of transmitter released by the axon per impulse received, by increasing the number of receptors on the dendrite, or by altering their sensitivity. Direct connection across a synapse using gap junctions --- membrane channels linking adjacent cells --- allows an impulse to pass unimpeded to the neighbouring cell. However, the gain in transmission speed provided by gap junctions is offset by a loss of flexibility: in essence, gap junctions fuse several neurons into one. The same result can be achieved more efficiently by lengthening the axons or dendrites --- some nerve cells reach a length of several metres. However, there are situations where gap junctions prove preferable. They are found in the cardiac and smooth musculature of vertebrates, both of which transmit impulses from cell to cell. This makes such muscles partly independent of nervous system control. In this way, the body can partly continue to function for some time even without the participation of the brain.

Nerve impulses travel faster along axons of larger diameter or along those that have good insulation preventing the leakage of ions (except at periodically spaced nodes needed for "recharging"). Vertebrates use their unique myelinated axons to increase the speed of nerve impulse transmission, while invertebrates are limited to using axons of larger diameter. As a result, vertebrates are able to fit more small neurons into a body of a given size, which creates the potential for more complex behaviour.

A brain with fewer neurons but more connections between them may be "smarter" than a brain with more neurons. Basic, repetitive actions are inherited or acquired through the formation of stable pathways along which a signal from the environment reaches the motor nerves rapidly and almost unchanged (reflex arcs). No reflex behaviour requires a decision to be made in the brain, and as a result the pathway to the motor nerves becomes increasingly stable (habitual), since one specific decision has proven correct time and again. Reflexes are faster than conscious decisions, but their relative adaptiveness depends on context.

Animals differ in the degree to which they rely on reflexes or make decisions --- and these differences are closely linked to brain size. Habitual actions are perhaps the most common response --- a compromise between speed of reaction and its appropriateness to context.

The earliest animals probably had a radial structure, so that bipolar neurons arranged in a net-like pattern were entirely justified. In such an arrangement, a stimulus acting on any point of the body can spread everywhere, causing a simple network of muscle fibres to contract simultaneously. In the case of directed movement and significant sensory signals arriving at the head end of a bilaterally symmetrical animal, the one-directional transmission of nerve impulses to the muscles becomes the only effective means of communication. The positioning of the brain in the head also reflects a drive towards efficiency and speed of information reception, since this position minimises the distance between sensory and associative neurons and concentrates both functions in a small, protected part of the body.

Predation existed hundreds of millions --- possibly billions --- of years before the appearance of the carnivorous creatures we habitually call by that name. The earliest predators were microorganisms that devoured or "grazed on" other microorganisms. Since fossil evidence is poorly preserved, these first predators may have appeared somewhere between 1 and more than 2.7 billion years ago. Predation noticeably increased in significance just before the Cambrian period --- around 550 million years ago.

Before 550 million years ago, animals could use cheaper alternatives to neurons to satisfy their ecological needs.

Ancient organisms inherited neural genes and may have used them to develop and distribute "proto-neural" sensory cells --- similar to those found in modern sponges. They then had to independently adapt these distributed "proto-neural" sensory cells into networks of neurons.

The palaeontological record shows that animals underwent profound morphological changes shortly after they began eating one another, 550 million years ago. Over the following 20 million years we see the first appearance of teeth, claws, spines, shells, skeletons, and boring organs. Given that the first fossil evidence of highly developed eyes dates to 525 million years ago, it is quite plausible that nervous systems should be added to this list of innovations. The sudden growth in the complexity and diversity of animal trace fossils that began 550 million years ago can be explained precisely by the appearance of neurons at this time.

Predator-prey relationships existed before the appearance of the nervous system.

The first interactions between predator and prey did not necessarily require neurons. All animals emit mechanical, chemical, electrical, and other signals in their immediate vicinity, and other animals are capable of detecting these signals and moving along their gradient towards the source. The taste of blood and the size of flesh attract predators like a drug.

This is precisely how, from generation to generation, some animals become perpetual prey and others become hunters.

Reaction time may reflect the biophysical limit on the speed at which biological cells are capable of generating and processing signals. Predation continues to this day to force animals to detect the approach of other animals and respond to it as quickly as possible; if they could respond in micro- or nanoseconds, we might well expect exactly that speed of them.

Animals do not need neurons to follow a gradient or react to stimuli. The very first predators and their prey could use similar, non-neural sensory abilities to follow the gradient, pursuing or retreating from one another. Nevertheless, globose cells express genes that suggest these cells are ancient sensory devices of animals.

To catch prey, predators employ a whole spectrum of chase strategies --- from open pursuit (course hunting) to a sudden lunge at nearby prey (ambush hunting). Another strategy, intermediate between ambush and pursuit, is ballistic interception, in which the predator observes the prey's movement, anticipates it, and strikes accordingly.

The earliest period of an animal's life is the period of embryonic development.

And even at this stage, predatory skills can manifest --- through cannibalism.

Embryonic cannibalism, sometimes called autophagy --- literally "eating of eggs" --- is a phenomenon in which embryos devour eggs produced by the ovary while still in the womb; this increases the energy supply and provides additional protein. This is known as a means of establishing a dominance hierarchy: dominant females eat the eggs of subordinate females, causing the latter to stop producing eggs --- possibly because of the inadvisable expenditure of energy and resources. Such behaviour has also been observed in certain bee species. Among them are *Xylocopa sulcatipes* and *Bombus ruderatus*, in which queen bees devour or evict from the nest the larvae laid by worker bees in order to maintain their dominance in the colony.

Although human embryos are rather peaceful. The viability of a foetus can be influenced by whether twins share a blood supply system, although most twins do not. In other words, if one of them dies, the surviving twin is generally not greatly affected.

Twins sense one another in the womb. Twins in the womb are aware of one another's presence, prefer to interact with each other, and respond to one another in a special way. "The womb appears to be a key starting point for the development of a sense of self and an awareness of others."

The "vanishing twin" is a phenomenon in which one of the foetuses of a multiple pregnancy dies in the womb early in the first trimester. Over the course of the pregnancy it is generally resorbed.

The vanished embryo is reabsorbed by the mother's body.

In extremely rare cases, the cells of the dead embryo are absorbed by the surviving twin. In that case, the remaining foetus becomes a chimaera --- a person with two sets of DNA, as Scientific American reports.

Under such circumstances, a person may live their entire life with two different blood types.

Some species of animals cannibalistic one another directly in the womb. Around ten embryos of the sand tiger shark, for example, begin to develop simultaneously, but the largest among them then devours all its brothers and sisters except one --- directly in the womb.

While most sharks give birth to several young at once, or "pups," sand tiger sharks give birth to only two at a time --- one from each of their two uteruses. This happens because the pup in each uterus has already eaten all the brothers and sisters that shared the womb with it --- a phenomenon known as embryonic cannibalism.

"These creatures are killing before they are even born," said Demian Chapman, who led a recent study on the reproductive system of these sharks.

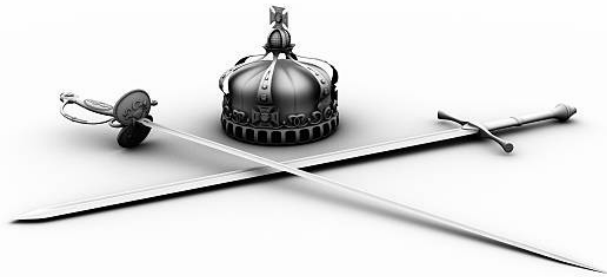
As a rule, the female sand tiger shark mates with several males and becomes pregnant with approximately six to seven embryos in each uterus. But as soon as the largest embryo reaches a size of 100 millimetres --- at around the fifth month of the twelve-month gestation period --- it breaks free from its egg capsule.

"And then it begins to emerge and actively hunt, killing the other embryos"; embryonic cannibalism can increase the likelihood that females give birth to offspring of "competitively more successful males," even if they could not determine which males were so before mating, or could not prevent other males from mating with them.

Nature is definitely not "merciful" when it comes to predation!! Why do the world's governments and religions forbid killing, but openly wage wars in the name of God, power, and wealth?

Why, when people are faced with the choice "kill or be killed," do so many choose to kill? Is this the law of life for the elite or the chosen? For how much longer will trials of ordinary citizens be so cruel and merciless? How can life after killing differ from the lives of innocent people? When have confession and repentance ever changed anyone's life?

The mind must bring chaos to order and eliminate the causes of problems. Even if this lies in the power of God or of people!



The Neurobiology of Fear: Predator and Prey in Close-Up

The data on fear bradycardia and the reactions of the amygdala set out above in fact describe not a single moment but an entire sequence unfolding as the predator approaches the prey --- and this sequence is worth examining step by step.

At a distance, when the prey first notices the threat, the first, defensive stage is activated: inhibition of motor activity, focused attention on the source of danger, and a slowing of the heart rate --- the so-called fear bradycardia. This, as Fanselow and then Kapp and colleagues have shown, is the responsibility of projections from the amygdala to the ventral central grey matter of the brain: it is an ancient circuit shared by a great many species, which is precisely why an animal caught in headlights 'freezes' rather than running immediately.

As the distance continues to shrink, the circuit switches to the second, anxiety stage (in the terminology of Masterson and Crawford): vigilance increases still further, the sympathetic nervous system is activated, blood is redirected to the large muscles, and the heartbeat, on the contrary, quickens. This is already preparation for action, not for waiting.

Finally, in the 'attack zone,' at the moment of direct confrontation, the third stage activates --- active defence, fight or flight --- the responsibility now not of the ventral but of the dorsal central grey matter. That is, the same volume of brain tissue literally engages differently depending on how far away the threat is --- and this is the physiological basis of what we colloquially call 'escalating fear.'

What is especially important for the theme of this book: studies of anticipated reward (in particular, the work of Zald and Schultz) show that in the predator during pursuit, almost the same structures are engaged as in the prey during defence --- the same amygdala, plus the nucleus accumbens and the medial prefrontal cortex, associated with anticipation. In other words, pursuit and fear are, at the level of neural circuits, two reflections of the same system directed either towards capture or towards avoidance. This symmetry, in my view, is the physiological foundation of what is later in this book described in the form of myth: predator and prey grow from the same evolutionary mechanism of fear, simply finding themselves on its opposite poles.

Part III. Metamorphoses and Pretence: The Werewolf Phenomenon

The third part of the book shifts register --- from history and biology to myth. But myth here serves not as an escape from reality but as a way of naming it. The werewolves discussed in the pages that follow are not only fantastic creatures from the Vanilla Galaxy and the World of Bits, but also a metaphor for people with a 'wolf soul' who live among us, appear to be ordinary people, and for a long time skillfully conceal their true nature. This part begins with myth --- the story of how a nameless monster became the progenitor of an entire species --- and ends with reality: the personal story of my friend Sabina, which shows that the boundary between myth and life is thinner than one would like to think.

Werewolves Exist

Arriving from nowhere.

She was neither the creation of God nor of the devil. She was a sinful soul wandering the vastness of the universe, with access to neither heaven nor hell. She had been expelled from the world of jackals for the monstrous nature of her crimes, and the expulsion had carried her far from the surface of this mother earth. She could find no place for herself and ultimately settled on one of the poorest planets in the galaxy. The angels of light and darkness struggled with her for a long time, but she promised to fulfil all the conditions and accept her fate.

By staying in contact with the angels, she was temporarily able to address problems of the celestial, earthly, and forest worlds. This life had been created apart from paradise and proved far from the justice she had hoped for. On that planet, the monster was the product of the decomposition of the corpses of dead bacteria and other parasites --- for it killed and continued to kill every living creature that crossed its path. With no clean water and no healthy food, no one cared for it. That was the only thing it depended on at the time. She was ugly and wretched, but more than anything in the world she wanted to live, to love herself, and to acknowledge the truth: even if she was ugly, she would have to accept herself as she was.

She did not understand who she was or why she had been created as she was. Why other creatures of God were granted more right to life, and why it was given to them to be better than her, so different from her. She learned to survive and to reproduce materially --- through the genetic memory of the decomposition matter from which she had arisen.

Millions of generations fought to live.

She was no more than a sinful soul and a spiritual orphan --- in the sense that the level of murders she had committed had cast her out like refuse from this world, just as the devil had been expelled from the face of God, never to be seen again and to be forgotten forever. She had become a spiritual orphan because no spirit wished to receive her in its dwelling --- for fear of being wounded or even killed by the werewolf spirit inhabiting her. The weight of her sins had cast her out like refuse from the world of jackals --- just as the demon had been expelled from the face of God, never to be seen again and to be forgotten forever.

She began to wander the spirit world in search of temporary shelter, and only the angels of death heard her prayers and promises and helped her settle on an abandoned star. There a bleak, terrible life awaited her. She lived only in hope of a chance to be reborn to a better life. For thousands of years she renewed her appearance in order to continue her former life, and brief death gave her only temporary respite from suffering.

She grew so weary that she wandered the universe ever more widely, with access to neither the afterlife nor heaven nor hell. She began to think to herself: if no afterlife existed, and if neither heaven nor hell could receive her because of her tendency to ferociously destroy the spiritual beings dwelling there --- she would patiently wait for the appointed time to be reborn as a human, born on this earth, or to appear on mother earth in a new body, so that she would not be recognised and sent back to where she had come from. Nothing but a bleak, terrible life that had to be lived only in order, a thousand years hence, to be reborn and continue the former life from which their brief death had relieved them.

They are monsters, and we call them werewolves. It took them thousands of years to reclaim the form of the wolf. The werewolf survived and multiplied in defiance of the laws of nature, in order to obtain life and conquer death --- and therefore they are condemned to kill in order to survive. With the wolf-demon inside, which has no other purpose than to destroy every living creature it comes into contact with, their chances of survival increase dramatically. This becomes the essence and meaning of their existence, for without killing living creatures for sustenance their survival would be threatened. Without this predatory way of life they would eventually die of hunger --- and this is unacceptable to them.

Werewolves are highly adaptable wolves with a distinctive head shape, complex, very brave and intelligent creatures, yet at the same time playful, caring, and loving --- but only towards their own family or kin. They also have hairy bodies with paws and long sharp claws, and in the process of hunting their prey they are capable of transforming into one or another dominant form. However, this depended on the place where they happened to be at the time. The ability to transform was something they had not even suspected in the beginning, but later, after several difficult years, they discovered that they were capable of such a transformation. They were proud and glad of this discovery, for they understood that this ability would help them to survive.

One of the main conditions that give the wolf-demon its strength is an abundance of food, providing more energy to roam in search of something to devour and a world to conquer. Most often they suffered a severe shortage of resources for life --- owing to the way those around them regarded them: as a bloodthirsty demon with no other purpose than to destroy every living creature in its path, merely to improve its own chances of survival. They also lacked healthy food, light, and even water, since a curse had been laid upon them --- to hunt and feed forever, slaking their bloodthirsty thirst, which was of course destructive for the other living creatures in the vicinity at the moment of attack. They were monsters and filled with terror all who saw them. The moment they were discovered could be the last day of their lives, because they were killed without the slightest drop of mercy.

These monsters were capable of devouring one another and choosing the strongest for combat, in order to determine which of them was strong enough to become the

leader. The killing of living creatures for sustenance was the condition of their existence down to the present day. Going round and round in circles, they continued their joyless existence, knowing neither the joy of life nor comfort. As if they had been created to suffer each time food grew scarce --- and this compelled them to seek a new world to conquer, in order to obtain as much sustenance as possible.

These monsters are capable of smelling and sensing the presence of living creatures around them. Their goal is to attack prey as quickly as possible upon catching sight of it, to kill it and savour its blood. They are so bloodthirsty that they barely differ from vampires. If they do not have enough blood to satisfy their hunger, they will perish --- and will never be reborn. However, wolves are more intelligent than vampires, because their will and character are weaker. They have no power over their own thoughts, feelings, or actions.

They were driven by a fear of the unknown --- perhaps they supposed that this was precisely what made them significant. Moreover, they feared being defeated, and so they instilled fear in others in order to prevail over them. They already knew: fear is the primary means of overcoming an enemy. Fear is a little death that breaks the spirit. What is more, they made skilful use of this, awakening the latent fear in their victims so that when the moment of the strike arrived, victory was guaranteed to them.

Living in constant fear, pain, and primordial savagery, they had no choice but to survive by whatever means possible. The situation sometimes grew so acute that they killed almost every living creature around them and had nothing left to feed on. Fury seized them; they desperately searched for prey, but all in vain. Questions swarmed in their minds: "Am I going to die? What if there is nothing left to eat? Can we survive this hunger?" The deeper they sank into these thoughts, the stronger their fury grew, ready to fall upon any living creature that crossed their path. They lived in a void; they prayed to become something different and to break free from their sufferings, hoping that a miracle would come from somewhere and allow them to find a living creature to feed on in order to survive. Their stomachs ached so much that it felt as if they were going mad.

The enormous diversity of animal species is determined by the combination of amino acids from which the organism is built --- it is in this that the differences between animals reside. Almost all living creatures are composed of a specific set of amino acids. However, these very elements largely determine the properties and true strength of an animal.

These paths of evolution, as an improvement of biological structure, have made these monsters almost perfect --- although in their own way they already are perfect. This very building material is organic and most closely resembles the matter of which other living creatures are composed.

Moreover, werewolves are, of course, accursed and an abomination, but they have their own way of biologically rewriting their DNA and the features of their faces in order to appear either more like their victim or to transform entirely into a wolf --- an ability that is fully revealed only when they begin to live among creatures opposite to them in nature. Pretending to be what they are not.

Drawing closer to other creatures in order to become more like them. Pretending to be as calm as they are, appearing as though they are not blood-sucking demons, moving among them as if they had been there from the very beginning of their existence.

Moving among their victims, dining with them at the same table, playing with them as with long-lost and at last rediscovered kinsmen --- all with the intention of one day striking, feeding on them and drinking their blood.

Oh no! Who will tell these victims that their worst nightmare is already among them? No one is visible! Since these victims could not foresee the approaching calamity, one can only hope that they will pray for a saviour who will come from somewhere and rescue them when the calamity at last descends upon them. Remarkable, is it not? And yet not all hope is lost.

Death is still far away. It seems to be advancing slowly. But then a thought struck the monsters: they are werewolves, endowed with the special ability to rewrite their genetic code so as to become the reflection of their victims. It seemed that this gave them a second chance at life. It was a sign of victory.

And then they began to look less and less at themselves and more and more at what they desired. This was a consequence of hunger overwhelming them. They fervently desired only one thing --- to drink blood. Not just once, but to drink continuously, however much time might pass. That was what they desired at that moment. And yet they were not going to simply sit and wait for a miracle --- for the prey to cross their path of its own accord --- but persistently sought whatever they could devour, if only to strengthen their existence a little.

Their life was simultaneously simple and extraordinarily complex. Love was the eternal companion of their terrible existence, the source of inspiration that sustained life. It was precisely for this that they had prayed for so long, but the prayer seemed to go unanswered. And yet it was precisely there that the answer lay.

To say that you love someone while causing them pain is not even something that resembles "like," let alone "love." Pretending to be friends, they were in reality wolves in sheep's clothing. Passion was one of the few feelings that brought them joy within the pack. Perhaps passion had been misunderstood --- what their attraction was supposed to mean, and whether the consequences --- the struggle and the pain they inflicted and were compelled to endure --- were merely the result of some desire that could bring pleasure but was not necessarily a good. The feeling of passion bound their lives together so tightly that even death could not separate them.

Love is the only law that wolves recognise. They knew that laws and rules differ and change from family to family. And these established rules, which differed depending on the origins of themselves and their victims, were the last thing to concern them. Life without a beloved creature leads to despondency, despondency to loss of appetite, and ultimately to the inevitable death of the werewolf. They were capable of enduring almost everything, but life without passion and love was worse than death itself. To remain in complete solitude, with not a single soul nearby, wandering from place to place, without hope that anyone would be there. At some point they had lost both themselves and all those dear to them. The desire to live

faded. Nothing was interesting anymore, and everything around seemed only a source of unease. At such times they needed someone to love them.

Wolves are prepared to fight to the death for love and for those they love --- across worlds, across the entire universe, if the opportunity presents itself. They die and are reborn again in order to be united with their beloved in some other world of the universe. This is a sign of love for their kind. The deeper he reflected upon this, the stronger his fury grew, ready to fall upon any living creature in his path. They lived in a void; they came from a prayer --- to become something different and to break free from their sufferings.

Recognising that they share the same nature, they do not fight amongst themselves, but know that they need one another to survive. To stand by one another, to kill together, to rejoice together, and to die for one another, protecting themselves from a more powerful and stronger werewolf.

At last, in the distance, a she-wolf appears. Bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh --- that is what he saw. Now they will be together. They will live as though bound by an eternal faithfulness. Beyond the boundless pleasure they derive from constantly being near one another, they are drawn to one another with equal force.

Savouring this moment together, while there is still time.

Female werewolves hunt males in order to engage in passionate intimacy --- and for them it is something more than mere pleasure; it is more like the pursuit of a dream and a heartfelt desire. But underlying it is a pleasure invisible to others. Deprived of this pleasure, which they were meant to receive regularly, they will not forget this burning passion even after thousands of years.

Female werewolves' menstrual cycles generally coincide with the lunar cycles. However, these moments come at different times for different females, since each has her own particular "heat" period. A few days before menstruation begins, females experience a sharp rise in hormone levels, and they desire a male more strongly than ever. In some this lasts about two weeks during the waxing moon; in others, during the waning moon. This is the time when bonds of love are formed between them and the males, in order to make the ties between them still more secure. Paying no heed to what other creatures think of them, wolves sense this time and the blood --- not only by the light of the bright full moon, but also by scent --- they find their mates and savour every moment of this union. Wasting no time and not wondering whether it will last forever. Not putting it off for an instant, because now is precisely the right time.

In this moment they are capable of thinking only of the pleasure of intimacy. All she desires is to be pierced by the male. Striving to build and strengthen the bond between them. This is the time when blood becomes the essential element determining their survival. Nothing else is capable of determining it --- not even the eating of the flesh and bones of their victims. Blood is all they need to survive. They thirst for blood; they wish to drink it until time itself loses all meaning.

Someone may call them an abomination, a mystery, a flaw in the magnanimous beauty of nature; there will be adherents of conspiracy theories who assert that this is, at last, the wrath of God falling upon them after centuries of disobedience to His will, and there will be those who are certain that the devil himself lives among them

--- but whatever the reason, there was no doubt that this was more terrifying than hell itself: all these wolves wanted was to drink blood. To drink it without end.

Yet what people say or think of them was not something they would pause to consider. If those creatures who dared to say all manner of nonsense about them had the audacity to come face to face with them, they would regret it and curse the day they were born.

There are many theories and fantasies about how they came into being, but one thing can be said with certainty: neither God nor the devil had anything to do with their creation --- they appeared from nothing, to roam the galaxy and rule over whatever planet they were destined to inhabit.



Vanilla Galaxy

The werewolves multiplied through their unbridled carnal desires, and their way of life corrupted the angels in their surroundings, helping those angels to acquire physical bodies and do what the werewolves did. Naturally, after this, such angels could no longer concentrate on the mission that had been assigned to them from above.

Her soul had been reborn on that planet for thousands of years, and then spread to other worlds. In every world where she sensed a drop of blood and warmth, she settled, in order to instil fear and terror among the peaceful and good creations of the higher mind. Over time, the wolf-kind became difficult to distinguish from other blessed beings.

Their connection with the celestial world grew ever stronger --- particularly with the fallen angels, and the bonds that united them were impossible to explain. Perhaps because both were damned and simultaneously glorified --- condemned to endure punishment or to live cruelly. The monsters spread to other stars and galaxies, without any superiority, mechanically, like machines of life. Or rather, machines of death, killing so many in their path. They scattered in all directions, searching for something to sustain themselves and prolong their lives.

Alive or dead, the werewolves wandered the universe to knock on the doors of paradise and reach the vanilla world. The vanilla world was a beautiful and enchanted place with beautiful inhabitants. Their flowers bloomed in the mornings, at dawn, and glowed with vivid colours at night, illuminating the entire world. The trees were tall there, and the fruits were magical. These fruits acted like potions

and bestowed vital energy filled with love. In the vanilla world there were wonderful waterfalls and crystal-clear rivers. All of nature was full of power and enchantment.

The main treasure of the vanilla world was its magical flowers. The entire earth was covered with remarkable forests of grasses and flowers. Certain flowers gave the nymphs great power. It was the magical flowers that made the vanilla world so beautiful. When these flowers bloomed, they glowed with vivid colours, transforming the world into something like a luminous orb of beauty and radiance. The fragrance of the flowers was enchanting, and one could lie and breathe in the scent of sweet vanilla for entire days.

The inhabitants of the vanilla world were beautiful nymphs --- both men and women. They too possessed magical power, but women practised magic more often than men, and were therefore stronger than them.

Men loved to sing and to gather magical herbs. Women, meanwhile, practised their magical power and transformed the magical herbs gathered by the men into healing and magical potions. This was how the inhabitants of the vanilla world lived --- peacefully, in fullness of life and joy.

This continued until the werewolves invaded the vanilla world. Everything descended into chaos.

The werewolves had come from a distant, poor galaxy, their nature remained unchanged, and hunger and passion continued to govern the minds of the wolves. But they liked the scent of the herbs and vivid flowers. They learned to trust their instincts and to quietly envelop everything around them in a web of traps for their victims.

They built their lives on the energy of death. To be so close to death --- yet not to die themselves. No creature had gone so far in dealing with death --- not tigers, not crocodiles. The wolf possessed intelligence and a special instinct. They were among the few creatures capable of defeating death and resurrecting themselves.

Resurrecting, first and foremost, themselves and those they loved.

The werewolves altered their appearance by recoding their genetic code, but they still looked like monsters --- with the same ferocious aspect as the others. All werewolves could do whatever they wished. At that moment there was nothing in their minds but the desire to attack and drink blood from the body of their victim. But looking into their eyes, many victims mistakenly believed them to be kind. Then they began to trust them more and more, not understanding that this was merely the outward appearance of monsters --- this sheepish look that made them seem pleasant and attractive at first glance. Yet inside them lurked none other than the wolf-demon. The wolves took everything best that crossed their path in order to satisfy the boundless hunger that tormented them from within --- for without this their survival would have been threatened. Werewolves were cruel, savage creatures prepared to do anything to survive.

They invaded the vanilla world and attempted to seize the magical beings in order to turn them into slaves.

Most nymphs were hunted down and killed when the hunger for blood seized the wolves. The nymphs were lured into traps, forced to build illusory dreams.

Until the magical nymph had become a victim and died. They died in agony, meeting a violent death. The monsters seized the souls of their victims with pleasure and passion, so that those souls could not be freed even after death. Their souls became the slaves of their tormentors. In the future they were reborn as their own children --- becoming part of a large family that united victims and their hunters. The monsters forced their children to perform any manner of work. The children were exploited, but these children blindly trusted their father, loved and feared him.

Thousands of nymphs were violated and killed. Those who survived the violence gave birth to children who were monsters. In this way an entire generation of nymphs was lost. Their children too were in bondage and were obliged to honour their fathers.

One pack was ruled by a fierce alpha leader by the name of Odrin, which in their language meant "warrior." The lives of the vanilla world's inhabitants held no value for him. He cared only for the power he could extract from this new world.

When Odrin wished to kill nymphs, he first inspired fear in them and then turned that fear against them. The monsters understood: a true friend is the most precious thing one can have when surrounded by enemies, because friends will stand and fight for one another. In such moments they set aside their disagreements in order to fight a common enemy together. But who had ever been a friend to a werewolf?

Odrin thought to himself that the happier the victim, the sweeter its flesh. He always told his slaves: "Have no fear and no anxiety, simply be happy," the wolf implored, "I am kind." Odrin wanted to acquire a portion of the nymphs' magic in order to obtain more power. But the nymphs had to share their magic of their own free will for the transfer to work.

His werewolves attacked with ferocity but met resistance from the women, who surpassed the men in the art of magic. The men helped in battle, giving the wounded women healing potions and also using the little magic they possessed in combination with their masculine strength, attempting to overcome the werewolves. But it was not enough.

Seeing that the men were weaker than the women in magical power, the werewolves attacked the men and took many of them captive. They threatened to kill all the men if the women did not surrender --- and the women decided to accept this condition.

The werewolves seized both the women and the men, keeping them in different lands.

The cruelty of the werewolves fell primarily upon the men. They were tortured with whips that had claws on their ends. A single stroke of the whip left five ragged wounds from the claws on a back. And all of this merely to force the women to work for them.

The less the women worked, the more savagely the men were tortured. The women were helpless and were forced to work ever harder.

They compelled the most powerful nymphs with strong magic to create amulets that would make the werewolves stronger than before, so that they could conquer

more and more worlds. The women were treated with no regard for their lives and were not permitted to meet with the men.

Odrin discovered that the more the women used their magical power, the weaker they became, and after several days of intensive use of magic some of the women began to die.

Odrin did not care. He ordered the bodies of the dead to be eaten and new women to be brought to replace those who had perished.

In the land of Tott there lived a pair of nymphs who were in love with one another. They often met to be together and talk about their future, but since the werewolves kept the men and women apart, the lovers could no longer see one another as before.

They decided to find a way to meet.

In the centre of the land of Tott there grew a cherry tree beside the largest orchid flower.

Its stem was green and its petals bright pink and violet, glowing with a vivid radiance at night. Yes, the lovers decided to make this place their secret meeting spot. They met there at least three times a week and talked until deep into the night about everything they missed so much in one another.

"Selma, we need to be more careful. The werewolves have increased the guards around the cages. It was very difficult for me to get out. I think we should stop meeting for a while. Let's wait and see how things go," suggested Mato.

"Don't say that, Mato. I want to be with you always, and no werewolf creature will stop me," said Selma.

"I want to be with you always too. But out of love for you we must be careful --- for our lives, if either of us is caught..." Mato wanted to say something more, but Selma interrupted him.

"We won't be caught, my love. Don't worry; I'll be careful, and you be careful for my sake," said Selma.

She kissed him tenderly on the lips and embraced him tightly.

"I love you so much, Mato, not even death will separate us," Selma whispered, resting her head on Mato's chest.

Mato kissed the top of her head. "I love you too, Selma, and nothing will separate us --- not even the werewolves."

Well, as the saying goes, good things rarely last.

One of them made a mistake.

When the young nymph crept out of the cage where they were kept to see her beloved, one of the werewolves noticed her and hurried to report it to the leader.

They followed the young woman and saw that she was meeting with the young nymph. They watched as the two lovers embraced by the largest tree.

The werewolf leader laughed as befitted a beast-like creature. He ordered his subordinates to surround the tree, cutting off any escape routes for the lovers.

"I hear something. Someone is coming," the young man said, alarmed.

They looked around and saw the werewolf leader standing by the large tree, laughing at them.

"Well, well, so the two of you have been meeting in secret, breaking the established rules," the leader said angrily. "This violation is punishable by death."

"No! Don't touch her!" --- the young man stepped forward to protect the woman.

One of the leader's subordinates struck him in the face with his fist.

"How dare you contradict the leader? You will pay for your insolence."

The werewolves surrounded the young nymph and began to beat him.

"Release him!!" --- the young nymph cried out. She gathered magic into her palms and hurled it at the werewolf leader.

"What a pity. Your magic cannot harm me," the werewolf leader laughed, showing her the magical amulet he wore.

"Well, if I cannot harm you..." --- the young woman gathered an enormous amount of magic around her body. --- "I can harm your followers." She cried out, releasing a magical explosion that knocked the werewolves off their feet.

"Stop using such powerful magic, you will harm yourself," the young man warned.

The werewolf leader kicked the young nymph in the head, sending him rolling across the ground and coming to rest at the very feet of the young nymph, with blood flowing from his mouth.

"No!!!! What have you done?" --- she cried, sinking to her knees beside her dying beloved.

"This is what happens to those who go against me. I have watched worlds fall; I have conquered worlds. You, wretched girl, cannot stop me," the werewolf leader taunted.

"Selma... run," the young man said to his beloved.

"No, Mato, I won't leave you," Selma wept.

"How touching. You will die along with him," the werewolf leader roared, lunging at her.

"Even with my last breath I will try to take you with me," she cried, gathering yet another enormous portion of magic within her body.

She released it in a powerful explosion that sent clouds of earth and stone flying through the air at tremendous speed. The werewolf leader quickly threw himself to the ground, dodging the flying debris. The young nymph collapsed beside her beloved, and they both smiled at one another.

"At last we will be free and can be together --- on the other side," the young man smiled sadly.

They closed their eyes, and a bright light enveloped them, dissolving their bodies. Dust rose into the night sky, momentarily forming the shape of a heart before it disappeared.

"Well, that was a waste of power. She could have created truly powerful amulets if she had directed that energy differently. Summon everyone immediately. Tonight all shall be punished. No more sleep --- the women must work five times harder than before. And include the young ones too --- it seems to me they have been hiding their true powers," the leader commanded.

Within a few minutes, the moans of women and cries of men rang out across the entire vanilla world.

Several days later, the number of women in the vanilla world had halved, and the men were dying primarily from illness and infection.

The blue sky of the vanilla world turned red, the crystal-clear rivers reeked of death, and the beautiful flowers were stained with blood.

What had once been a beautiful world had become complete chaos under the rule of the tyrannical werewolf leader.

World of Bits

Another world that suffered an invasion by the monsters was located on the planet of lice --- one of the beautiful planets of the Triangulum Galaxy. The Triangulum Galaxy is the third-largest member of the Local Group of galaxies, after the Milky Way and the Andromeda Galaxy. In the local language, these lice are called Bits.

Life on this planet is very vivid, even though there is no sun providing light there. It is always warm and bright. The planet itself resembles a luminous orb. The light emanating from the planet's atmosphere spreads everywhere, illuminating the entire world.

The World of Bits is beautiful and filled with boundless sands and sparse vegetation.

This is because this world can be compared to a desert. But it is no ordinary desert where as far as the eye can see there is nothing but sand. No!!

The planet of Bits has remarkable deserts; the cacti there are very tall and not as prickly as ordinary cacti. These plants grow in rows, which makes the planet somewhat resemble a cornfield. The cacti contain something that the Bits call the Juice of Life. Only Bits are capable of processing it, and it is from this that they obtain water. They bore holes in the cacti and suck the liquid from them, which in turn gives them the ability to endure the excessive heat on the planet.

The wolves were naturally drawn to power, and upon discovering this special ability on this planet they decided to obtain it for themselves. The same old, selfish habits. No care for the lives of others --- only for their own. They live by hunting; power is their goal and their main priority. They never wish to yield to fear, and their mission again and again was to conquer a new world by whatever means necessary ---

whether this involved the complete destruction of the planet's native inhabitants, they could not have cared less. Such were the ways of the wolves.

The main inhabitants were lice, but they were called Bits, because they are small, sweet, kind creatures covered all over with fur. They spend most of their time feeding on the green foliage of this world. Parents care for their offspring, always trying to protect them from the single thorn in their side.

Their only enemy --- the wolves!

The Bits suffered from the incessant, unrelenting attacks of the wolves.

The wolves appeared to the little Bits as gigantic, terrifying monsters, and thanks to their incredible speed they overtook and killed their victims without difficulty, leaving the lice no possibility of resisting or fighting back. All that remained to them was to run, saving their tiny lives.

The wolves were attracted to this planet because the Bits living there possessed special abilities, and the wolves wanted to become the main inhabitants of this world themselves. These wolves were blood-sucking werewolves who had come from another world to seize the planet of the Bits and feed on the little lice, thereby acquiring special abilities. But the wolves were poorly adapted to the local climate.

Although the wolves appeared strong and formidable, they had a weakness on the planet of the Bits: due to the high temperature on the planet, wolves died of thirst more often than of hunger.

The Bits noticed this and tried to use it to their advantage, since they could not hope to overpower the wolves by force.

But this did not help either: the wolves were too fast, and the sweet little Bits could not run as swiftly. They either managed to hide in time or became food for the wolves. The bodies of Bits drained of blood lay strewn across the entire planet --- the wolves' fangs continued to claim more and more lives.

Among the Bits fighting for survival was a small family of three lice --- a mother, a father, and their little son.

They too tried to evade the wolves for as long as possible, but each day this became more difficult.

Many Bits had been killed, and the number of lice had fallen considerably. The surviving Bits began to live in constant fear, not knowing who would be seized next.

Because of this, the surviving Bits took to hiding. But there were not many secluded places in this world apart from caves, and before they managed to reach the caves, most had already been killed by the wolves.

The more lice evaded death and found safety in the caves, the less space remained in those caves.

Our family of three lice did not know what to do.

Which route to take in order to safely reach one of the caves? The father and mother lice discussed this in whispers. They were hiding behind a cactus, not taking

their eyes off the little one. The cactus was tall, and its shadow covered the whole family, concealing them from the eyes of the patrolling wolves.

The mother-louse put forward an idea about how to reach one of the caves.

She proposed taking the route through the hottest part of the desert, so that the wolves would tire more quickly and become thirsty and perhaps die of thirst.

The father-louse liked the idea, but it carried risks.

They were some distance from the hottest parts of the planet, and the wolves now patrolled the surroundings every day, searching for Bits to seize and drink their blood.

The blood of Bits gave the wolves the ability to endure the heat and improved healing abilities. But the effect was not permanent and weakened over time. So the wolves had to keep drinking the blood of the lice again and again to maintain the special abilities. The wolf leader tried to find a way to make the effect permanent, but they never found a solution.

Many wolves nonetheless died of thirst and excessive heat. The only solution they found was to continue feeding on as many lice as possible.

The risk of this plan was enormous, and the father-louse proposed scouting the terrain to understand how the wolves moved. But the mother-louse did not want him to go. She was afraid that he would not return to them. They were also worried that the little one might become separated from them during the escape attempt.

The wolves were merciless; if they noticed him, it would mean his end. This was precisely why the mother-louse did not want him to go scouting.

The father-louse promised to be careful, and after long persuasion she reluctantly agreed.

The father-louse carefully, slowly crept outside, making sure that his furry body made no rustling sound among the leaves. He lay pressed to the ground among the grasses, looking around him. He noticed several wolves wandering about and laughing at the dead lice. Anger boiled inside him as he watched these monsters treating his kindred with not the slightest respect.

He observed them in silence for a while before moving to another location. The wolves in the new spot were well organised. They kept glancing around, checking whether any lice were visible.

The father-louse studied them too. They were right on the border with the hottest part of the planet.

He began to work out in his head how to slip past them. If they could manage to slip past this detachment of wolves, the cave would be quite close.

The father-louse thought the plan through on his way back to his family's shelter. He had formed a plan and shared it with his wife. She liked the idea, and they decided to act later that same day.

They decided to follow along the shadows of the cacti. Using the shadows that the cacti cast on the ground as cover, the father-louse reasoned that they would be

able to move unseen by the wolf patrol, and when they reached the point directly before the hot zone, they would break into a run. The hot zone was supposed to slow the wolves down just enough for them to reach one of the caves.

The father-louse was thinking to himself. He knew that this plan was dangerous --- not only for him, but for his whole family. The little one might not be able to run fast; what if he himself proved too slow and was caught? What if one of them was noticed --- what would become of them then?

All these questions spun in the father-louse's mind, but he decided that he would never know the answers if they didn't try. In the end they would perish at the hands of the wolves or from starvation --- whichever came first. So why wait and live in fear of the day when death would come? With this thought, the father-louse decided to follow the plan. He quickly told his wife what he had found; she too was not certain about the plan, since the chances of survival were only fifty-fifty. But deep in her heart she thought that it was better to die than to watch the wolves cause pain to her family.

Soon they set off, the mother-louse staying close to the little one. They moved carefully along the shadows of the cacti, keeping watch for any signs of the wolves' presence. They slowed each time a wolf came close enough to notice them, and moved again when the danger had passed. This was especially hard for the mother and father louse, for they also had to watch the little one to make sure he did not stray from them or catch the wolves' eye.

The father and mother louse breathed sighs of relief each time they managed to avoid danger. They safely entered the hot zone, but at that very moment a sentry wolf spotted them. The monster roared and gave chase, sending the lice jumping in fright.

They ran with all their might towards the cave, which was now visible ahead.

The mother-louse glanced back and saw that the wolf was gaining on them. Though he was already starting to slow down from the heat, which was making him thirsty, his current speed was still sufficient to overtake them. With this thought, she fell to the ground. She stopped running and watched as her family raced towards the cave, while she herself held the wolf back.

The father-louse looked back, but did not see his wife beside him. Then he heard her shouting for them to save themselves. She was crying out to him how much she loved him, and that he must take care of the little one. The father-louse could not bring himself to turn around. Tears streamed from his eyes as he forced himself to run on, in order to save the little one and not let his wife's death be in vain.

He quickly covered the little one's eyes with his hands, while tears streamed from his own.

He slowly retreated into the cave, watching as the wolf quickly dealt with his wife.

The wolf looked at him and snarled --- he had managed to absorb a little of the special properties of her blood. He could not attack them inside the cave, because it was too hot in there, and the blood he had drunk from the mother-louse had not been enough to prevent him from dying of the heat. He howled before running away.

The little one could not find his mother and asked his father about it, but the father-louse could not bring himself to tell him the truth.

"She saved us from that monster; now she is in a better place, where no one will ever be able to hurt her again," replied the father-louse. He knew that the mother-louse was still near --- her spirit continued to live inside them. Now her presence protected them from the evil monsters. This terror that the wolves had brought into this world must come to an end, so that families would never again have to lose those dear to them.

From Myth to Reality

The story of the werewolf leader Odrin, told in the 'Vanilla Galaxy' chapter, is not merely fantasy. In it is already visible the same logic I then encountered in life: the happier the victim appears to those around them, the easier it is for the predator to remain undetected; the more trust they are given, the more devastating the blow when the mask finally slips. The chapter that follows moves this logic from a fictional planet to our own --- into the story of my old school friend Sabina, her marriage, and what happened to her and her son in Norway. I tell it here not to accuse anyone in court but to show how close together myth and reality can be.

Our Planet

Some names in this chapter have been changed from the first edition to protect the privacy of those involved; the story itself and its details remain unchanged.

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Werewolves walk like people and live among us, in our society today; it is not so easy to recognise them on the street until you draw closer to them --- they are masters of pretence, lies, and false living. They are capable of convincing anyone that they are such-and-such a person, when in reality they are not at all who they claim to be. It is impossible to identify them easily without getting to know them properly.

The story of my old friend Sabina's marriage opened my eyes to the fact that werewolves live among us, in our society, very close to us --- and it is impossible to recognise them unless you have spent enough time with them or shared something personal.

I met my old school friend Sabina in a shopping centre in Norway.

She looked troubled, and it seemed that she had been through a great deal. I called out to her from a distance: "Sabina!" At first she looked at me as if I were a complete stranger, but I went up to her and reminded her who I was. She was glad to see me, embraced me, and greeted me warmly. What struck me was how she looked --- her beauty seemed somehow faded.

I decided to ask what had happened. She replied: "Honestly, Britt, I've had problems ever since I married my husband, and now, as I speak to you, I'm already divorced."

It seemed as though she was about to burst into tears; I drew closer, wiped her face, and suggested that we sit in my car so that we could talk everything over, since I could see that a brief conversation would not be enough. Once we were in the car, I asked what had happened and how it had come about.

She looked me in the face and said: "Britt, there are people in this world who are beasts by nature; such people are born into large families, and they are not easy to identify --- they are pretenders, and if you don't get close to them, you will never know what they are capable of. I ended up among such people by mistake when I married my husband Kristian. At first he seemed like a wonderful person, and I didn't understand that everything I saw in him was merely pretence --- until we got married and I drew closer to his family.

In 2013, Kristian and I fell in love, and he married me, taking me away from a distant eastern country. I am a beautiful, cheerful, and intelligent woman. After the wedding, Kris turned out to be a genuine Nazi. They are like wolves in human clothing. Kris wanted to suppress my personality --- exactly as he had always suppressed other people, because of his own fears, shortcomings, and problems that had been building since childhood. He stuttered, and because of this others mocked him. To my astonishment, I found out that his entire family were Nazis and racists. They believed that the pinnacle of perfection was blue eyes and fair hair. Because Hitler once decided that fair hair is better than dark. What zombies!

I was not ready to have a child so quickly, but that was his goal, and I was inexperienced. And so it turned out that my pregnancy was not a happy one.

In the eighth month of pregnancy the wolves began talking to me about Muslim terrorism and Nazism, and at that point I understood that I had made a mistake in entering their family, but I tried to think positively. I told myself: perhaps it's simply that our marriage was still brand new?

After nine months of pregnancy the baby was born, and everything seemed to be turned upside down. At first, after the birth of the child, the werewolf family pretended to be ready to help me.

What happened was this: a few days after my son's birth, we moved into my husband's family home. When I found myself in their house, the entire family began picking fault with everything I did, from all sides. Instead of breakfast, they fed me with accusations. Both my father-in-law and my mother-in-law --- I didn't understand what they were after or how to talk to them. The chief wolf --- my father-in-law --- literally followed me everywhere! He blamed me for everything, even following me to the toilet, demanding my attention. My mother-in-law would not allow us to be alone with the baby; she too followed us around all the rooms and even to the toilet. I wanted to be alone with the baby, but they demanded that I sit in the living room and let them watch me breastfeed. It was precisely at these moments that they would begin asking questions, talking, and accusing me of trivial matters. My mother-in-law shouted everywhere that she was helping me and the child welfare authorities. Sometimes she would follow me to the toilet and check whether the baby's bottom had been cleaned properly. She liked to tell me to be more thorough in washing the baby. There was a day when I wanted to shout at her, but instead I calmly explained that she was interfering in another family's affairs, and if she didn't want to spend the rest of her life washing someone else's child, she should

leave us alone. Another time her daughter came to teach me that everything needed to be wiped thoroughly, including every little fold. In order not to seem rude towards my husband's family, I stayed silent as if I hadn't heard what she was saying. After living in the same house with them for just two months, they had managed to destroy our marriage and steal my child from me." Sabina drew a deep breath.

I waited for her to calm down and asked quietly: "Did you try to talk to him on his own --- without his parents? To explain what was happening?"

"I tried. Many times. But as soon as I said anything to him, he would pass it on to them that very same day."

I said to her: "Ever since I was born, I have noticed that some people in this world look like ordinary people, but their behaviour is completely different from that of the real people we all know. Such people are hard to identify at first." I truly understood that such people do exist in our world when I met her again and heard her telling me of her sufferings and her experience of marriage in Norway.

To tell the truth, in every person in this world there lives some kind of animal, and within each of us there dwells a wolf. The personality and soul of the wolf have always lived in people, but it is so small that it can hide in the folds of a brow. There is a parallel between these worlds.

If one draws a parallel between the vanilla world and our planet --- in this world the wolf was a man. He usually appeared and lived in the north, and we have already seen him before, in the story of fratricide. This wolf lived in Scandinavia; his name was Gunnar, and he himself knew that he was a wolf. Gunnar told me that the only thing he had always been afraid of was the dark. He created a large werewolf family --- the Synnviks. Gunnar married a woman named Turid. This wife was nobody --- a walking question without an answer. She had long ago lost her self-respect and her own opinion. They had four children. The nymph Selma was his first daughter; Gunnar called her "Maria," after the mother of Jesus. She had a wide smile and truly loved her father, calling him the best father in the world. The second child was a boy, most likely transgender; in his soul he was a doe, and his name was Kristian. The third was an illegitimate son, with his judgement knocked askew; he was strong and dangerous as a black wildcat. Mainly because Gunnar was not his biological father. The youngest son, Marcus, was something between E. coli and stomach bacteria.

All his victims were reborn as his own children, whom he cherished as the apple of his eye. They were the victims of a predator who had forgotten that once a spirit is broken, it can only be changed through upbringing. His children loved and praised him.

The monster seized the souls of his victims with pleasure and passion so that those souls could not be freed even after death. Their souls became the slaves of their tormentors. They would become part of a large family that united victims and their hunters. The monsters forced their children to perform any manner of work. The children were exploited, but these children blindly trusted their father, loved and cherished and feared him. Having tasted luxury and wealth, they ceased to consider the pain and suffering of others important. They had to survive through everything --- wealth, poverty, illness, and health. To live in order to live! The wolf was adept at

openly lying to those he loved, and he lied to strangers too --- doing so calmly, joking when he should have been serious, or apologising when he was trying to cause harm. He never risked being sincere with anyone. He had a mask: he nourished the illusions of those who listened to him and told them exactly what they wanted to hear.

He had a mask whose name was Credulity, and he communicated only through this mask; it was the mask that spoke with his victims --- a mask of kindness and compassion.

This mask had a fine character and handsome looks.

The wolf was always afraid to remove the mask and be himself. He knew that by removing the mask, he would lose his friends and those who believed in him. He waited for the moment when he would no longer need to say anything and everything would become clear of its own accord. The moment he put on this attractive mask, he gained the power to lie in such a way that it sounded like the truth. The mask served a single purpose --- to convince those with whom he spoke, while in reality it was only the mask that communicated.

His face glowed with anticipation and became so attractive that everyone wanted to listen to him. He knew how to play the friend --- to blunt his victim's anxiety when they slept. He would typically assure his victims that he knew what to do, that he was there to help, and that he could be relied upon --- he was dependable.

The happier the victim, the sweeter their flesh. The wolf said to his victim: "Have no fear and no anxiety, simply be happy," assuring them that he was kind.

The moment he began to speak, he immediately identified who was stronger than him and understood that he would lose in a fight against that person. He had a crafty nature; when he was deceiving someone, he became excited and continued to deceive his victim, feeling that life was growing brighter and more colourful. His heart began to beat faster, his pulse quickened, and he spoke without stopping, trying not to get tangled up in his own lies and to speak as much truth as possible --- so that one lie concealed all the truth and killed the enemy. The wolf among people devises new survival strategies every day among the most powerful and successful people, biding his time for the moment to strike, in order to overcome those who have weakened. They gathered in packs rather than acting alone.

The hunt was their passion; their passion was the only joy in their lives. When hunger began to strangle them, they lost their minds more and more with each passing hour; more and more bile built up inside and corroded their organs. The thought of dying of hunger drove them mad. They were prepared to do anything to find a new victim. When the time came to go hunting, all their plans began to take shape only as obstacles and difficulties arose along the way. Gunnar was deeply religious --- this helped him to see the light and not be afraid of the darkness. The wolf was a man of religion. He was a sectarian, a religious fanatic, a propagandist, and an instigator. The idea of miracles, magic, and the blessed who needed neither wealth nor luxury healed his sick soul. Having broken all the most important commandments, he believed that God would forgive everything and would forgive him too.

Gunnar was a farmer who raised cattle, but was also interested in international terrorism --- his behaviour astonished me. He compared the Quran with the Bible and did not believe in a single God; he did not allow anyone to speak the name of Allah in his house.

I can see that in one of his past lives he broke his sword, killing his own brother...

and was condemned to wear chains to the end of his days.

Wolves in human clothing.

I was thinking about what she felt inside, and, not knowing how to help, I simply asked: "What happened next?"

Sabina continued her account: "My son was born a calm and quiet boy. Everyone noticed how beautiful he was and spoke about it. I remember the day when my baby and I woke up in the night at the same time; I opened my eyes and saw him looking at me --- it made me happy to see him happy. I fed him and felt that he wanted to say something to me in some nameless language; anxious thoughts about child welfare services tormented me even at night. After feeding him I brought him to the window, wanting to show him the starry sky so that he could fall asleep more quickly, but as soon as he was at the window he began to cry, his whole face streaked with tears. I was very surprised: why had he suddenly become so distressed, or what had I done wrong to cause his tears? I decided that I should carry him back to the room, and I did; as soon as I brought him inside, he fell silent, and it seemed to me as though I could hear some kind of word from him, and I calmed down, as if I had nothing more to worry about. It seemed he was simply crying because he was still too young. But deep in my heart I believed that the Creator had made us rightly and that tears do not flow without reason --- which meant his crying had its causes.

Children feel everything and know a great deal that I did not, and seemed to be talking about something I could not see. This feeling was hard to convey; I didn't know what to do. The night sky was gloomy, covered in black clouds, the shadows of night surrounded me, and I wanted to find the light.

When it rained, it seemed as though the heavens were weeping for lost love. Children know everything, but cannot tell others about it. The psychological pressure on me was stronger than at any other time in my life. I was not prepared for this and had done nothing bad enough to expect such treatment in return.

On Christmas Eve in 2015, my mother-in-law called me and said that I had bought no gifts because I had given them a child as a Christmas present --- and she laughed. This struck me as a monstrous joke. I had wanted the child for myself; he had enormous significance in my life, but living in the same house as my husband's family was like living in hell.

Weeks and months passed, and I told my husband's family, with whom I lived, about everything I had seen that night. What frightened me was that they did not reassure me, did not tell me that they didn't know what might have caused such behaviour. This too struck me as strange, and I began to understand that my mother-in-law had conspired with the welfare authorities against me. My mother-in-law reported every step I took to the child protection services; she manipulated me and tried to control me.

I tried not to come into conflict with my husband's family.

Sometimes I complained to Kristian about what they were doing, but he betrayed me and argued with me, and besides, he always passed on my words to them, and they used this against me too.

I didn't understand why Gunnar and Turid kept watch over our young family. There was a day when I was alone with the baby in Turid's room; she called me in and began shouting at me, ordering me to come and sit in the living room so that it would be more convenient for them to observe me while I was breastfeeding. Coming into the living room, they would begin to ask me strange questions in order to draw me into a quarrel. After sitting there for a while I stood up and headed for the toilet --- and they made sure I actually went there. Gunnar, every time I was washing, would follow me to the toilet and then apologise, as if he had accidentally walked into the door.

Kristian tried to prevent my mother from coming to see me after the birth. My mother came anyway. He told the welfare authorities that my mother had tried to kill our son. He also tried to accuse my mother of theft and placed forged documents for her to sign. Kristian and his brother stole my money and placed the blame on my mother. Kristian took away my bus pass; there was no bus and no taxi. So, hoping to hitch a ride, I had to walk to another town to be with my mother. Having dropped the men off in the town, Kristian threatened my mother and demanded that she sign documents. In this document was a confession of guilt for theft and attempting to harm the child. If my mother signed the paper, she would be allowed to see her grandson but was not to touch him. I did not allow my mother to sign this nonsense! What was happening was a genuine shock to me. After this, everything about me irritated him --- down to my own mother. There was a day when my mother came to visit me in Norway and I went to her hotel. I saw large bruises on my mother's arm; she did not say where they were from. She said I needed to go back to the baby.

Sabina fell silent for a moment. I felt the breath catch in my throat. "Those bruises --- was it him?" I asked.

Sabina looked out of the window. "She didn't confess. But there's no one else." My mother's presence was my support. Kristian accused her of trying to kill my son! He altered her statement and tried to force her to sign a document saying she could only see the child but not touch him. She had come for a week and wanted to stay with us longer, but I did not allow her to stay too long or to sign any documents, because the police proceedings could have gone unpredictably and dragged on. Thank God, she left that country safely!

On the day my mother left, Kristian called me and said he was leaving me. When I heard this, my legs gave way; I didn't understand what was happening to him. He said to me: "You need to go to the welfare authorities and notify them of our separation." Shortly afterwards my mother-in-law threw me out of the house, declaring that I was unable to care for the child. Linda and Fin said at the time that "the child no longer needs a mother" and that I should surrender and accept it.

Then Kristian stopped by the family office for an hour.

I told my husband about all the problems I was having to face; he passed this on to his parents. The following morning Turid said that I could no longer stay in the same house as them. From this moment on Kristian grew tired of my suffering, pain, trauma, and weakness. He said: "Either you or I will care for the child."

Before that day I had already noticed a change in Kristian's attitude towards me --- he no longer cared for me and behaved differently towards me. On the few occasions when he showed me photographs on his phone, among them was a photo of another woman with whom he had a child. I asked him to delete this photo, but he refused, and I asked whether he loved me or not. He flew into a rage at this question, and when I asked whether he loved me, he answered that he only loved his father!

It seemed as though nothing mattered to him, and for a while I stopped talking to him, but he caused a scene.

Before I separated from Kris, he forcibly took the child from me. I accidentally overheard his telephone conversation --- he said that they would "notify the welfare authorities about the separation."

When I went to the welfare authorities, I was told that the child was already two months old and that he no longer needed a mother, because he could survive without milk; I was asked to accept this and give up. The next step was to go to the family office. My knees were trembling, my voice was breaking, I cried and begged my husband to forgive me. He promised that this was only a temporary separation and that he would return soon. I tried to reach an agreement and did not want the problem to escalate into violence. The child's father intimidated me and compelled me to sign the divorce papers at the family office; we were met by the secretary Katrin Neset, one of the welfare officers Lene Strømdal, and my former husband Kristian Synnøvik.

They gave me a document about parental responsibility rights to read and asked me to sign it. It turned out to contain nothing of what I had been promised. I was told that the rights of mother and father would remain equal and that only a visitation schedule was being signed.

The welfare officer Lene Strømdal sat between me and my husband. She stroked my hair and looked into my eyes. From time to time she rubbed her own eye and continued to hold my attention. I asked her whether this work was easy for her. She replied: "Usually it's not difficult." She praised me for my good behaviour. She embraced me and said: "Your child will be all right." I didn't understand what was happening to me; I took my husband's hand. And we walked home hand in hand; he said he would return to me soon. The welfare officer followed us and stayed behind to make copies of other documents.

I waited for my son every hour of my life, thinking of him. I was ready to forgive everything, as long as I could be near my son. But a week later the son was brought only according to the schedule, as agreed in the contract. I waited a month and then began to suspect that my husband himself didn't understand what he was doing.

He said that the welfare authorities had asked him to leave me. At the time, Lene Strømdal stated that she had made no such request, and that Kristian had made

this decision himself. The welfare authorities bear no responsibility for his decisions. Lene Strømdal and her colleague Hilda Høgstad asked me to go back to school and learn Norwegian, so that I could become a sociable and good mother. They said I needed to tell my child that I loved him and that our family needed to improve. In the first few days the child was brought to me.

My husband was convincing me that I had to do everything the welfare authorities required, while he himself was secretly persuading those same authorities to take the measures he needed.

In February 2016 I begged him to allow my son to stay with me. Kristian said: "You're hopeless! Look at this table --- there's a dirty mark on it, and there are plenty more."

Kristian went to the kitchen to look for marks and said that next time I would have to do this and that. "Next time I come, wash this and clean the toilet." He said he would return soon, but he didn't! Time passed, and a month later, in March, we had our next meeting at the family affairs office. When asked when my son would be living with me, Kristian replied: "After the summer." I decided to divorce him for good. I waited for my husband days, weeks, months.

Three months passed and my husband did not return to me. At a subsequent meeting at the family office, he said that he might return after the summer --- another three months away.

I decided to consult a lawyer and open a dialogue with the child's father. It turned out that my husband was furious at my behaviour and began to accuse me of everything he could think of. At yoga classes I met Hedda, who recommended her lawyer to me --- Una Helland said that I had no maternal rights and that my signature was on file in the archives. Apparently I had renounced my child. I could not believe this; I explained that I had known nothing about it, that I had not signed anything and had not renounced my child. Una said we needed to go to court, and that I had nothing to lose. Una insisted on immediate action, but knowing my husband's character, I asked her to proceed carefully. We began a correspondence that made our relations still more complicated. My husband called the lawyer a bitch and got angry with me.

He wanted to decide everything himself and to be everything for me and the child.

We knew that the signature needed to be declared invalid. But the lawyer kept saying that the judge would decide on his own and that no pressure should be put on him. During a visit with the child I begged my husband to return; he looked at me and called me hopeless.

After the separation, life seemed for a while easier than before, but for my son everything was completely different --- he was left in that hell, in anxiety and fear, and I was growing worse and worse myself."

After a few minutes of silence, Sabina continued her account: "My child is both north and south. In the Caucasus, children receive a great deal of attention, especially from their mothers, not from neighbours or relatives. This is the norm in other countries too. In Norway the attitude towards small and large families is different. From time immemorial, because of financial dependence and poverty,

large families with a division of labour and mutual material support have been preferred here.

Such families are called 'gift families' or 'bonus families.' The social services assume that a child not of the family, upon finding themselves in such a family, can become an equal member of it and receive appropriate care. But most families take children for the additional income and use them for their own purposes, suppressing their personalities. This economically stable country has developed economic strategies for providing parental benefits to those who wish to have children --- and both the poor and the rich abuse these.

They protect the rights of children --- by stealing and robbing them of their childhood. They say children have rights, but they are the ones who decide what we may allow children and what should be restricted --- right down to the choice of education, films, and literature.

Control over culture, faith, and national characteristics. Hilda replaced Linda in court; she said that I showed insufficient emotion towards my son. I am still in pain! This is not a civilised country. A bloody Viking hole. The ultimate goal of Norwegians is the trafficking of human stock. For this purpose they invented the superior white race. Abducted Nazi children are a commodity that will play its role in future international relations. The future of international relations, in the guise of regional administrators and so on, may end up in the hands of adopted and multinational children. That is why thousands of qualified specialists marry foreigners every year to start a family. In the past this was how the Vikings raised enemies of the nation from which those enemies came. For in the old days the adoption ceremony was simple. The child had to sit on the lap of the parent who would call out its name. So do the legends tell us how adopted children were used in battles against their own families and tribes, in order to survive in the new society.

What rights do children have?

Why do they belong to the state? Does the state give birth to children?

How can this country be called the best in the world?

Norway's strategy is to grow the country's population so as to become as great as its neighbours and to compete with China. That is why they issue financial subsidies to those who want to become parents. The demographic problem of a sparsely populated place drives people to create large families and expand to match the neighbouring country." She wiped her tears and continued: "During my visits to my child, the Norwegian women around me intruded shamelessly into the communication between mother and child --- they spoke rudely, condescendingly, in raised voices.

Their demands are unjustified, but they refer to official laws and Norwegian children's rights. They want me to comply with their demands immediately, but this did not help. Working with children requires strong nerves, and these people see danger at every step and jump to hasty conclusions. They do not support you in a difficult situation but only make it more acute and cause you more anxiety.

In the social services, women with harsh methods of upbringing work with children. Newborns from the age of three months are taught to obey permissions and prohibitions. At an early age their personalities are not developed at all. For

disobedience, small children are punished in toilets, where they are taught to respect adult men. This dogmatic, medieval upbringing has taken deep root in Norwegian culture. I do not use either slave or peasant methods of upbringing.

Children learn through play and through understanding feelings. The local residents have so many children in their families that they tire you out by their sheer number. They shout at them, scold them, forbid them everything. I saw my child for one hour a month, and I was required to be the same as other mothers. I do not want to impose on others rules that I myself do not fully understand. There is no need to torment children; life holds better things than strict rules, and one needs to be able to notice this.

Norway's legal norms do not conform to modern international legal standards. What century is this? I believe it is necessary to say that every child is unique. The same method of upbringing does not suit everyone."

I asked: "And what about the father's care? Does he look after the baby well?"

"From the very beginning he cared poorly for our son. The child lost his appetite, became nervous and irritable. The father did not wash the baby's face after feeding, so the child's face was covered in baby food all day long. He fed the child through tears. When we were together, the child rarely cried, but with Kristian he was irritable and cross. During our walk in Skudeneshavn, Kristian offered the child a live spider to eat. He found a worm and gave it to the baby to hold. An unwashed, living, red worm. I stopped the child and didn't let him eat the insect --- but only because I was there. All the other time I cannot even imagine what Kristian is offering my son now that I'm no longer with them.

This situation broke my heart; I forced myself every morning to get up and live for my son --- to help him when I could.

There was a day when I was talking to him about feeding our son more slowly, but Kristian did not wipe the boy's mouth before the next spoonful, so the baby's face stayed covered in porridge for hours. He photographed this and sent the pictures to others. When the baby cried during feeding and opened his mouth, he gave him a full spoonful, but the baby cried still louder and more intensely and spat out the food. My son lost his appetite; he ate only half of what he had eaten before. The milk that he was compelled to drink in bed when he was already falling asleep. The father feeds him through tears!

My little boy didn't drink or eat while he was awake; Kristian would squeeze milk into his mouth when his son woke from sleep. He said I should not allow him to eat when he himself wanted to. He said I was making a drama out of nothing.

Six months after the separation there was an informal hearing in court; I needed to say so much, but I had no opportunity to say it all. And Judge Leif Egil Helstad adhered to a strict format. He followed the psychologist's advice and made a serious mistake.

A third party was brought into our case --- an independent court-appointed expert psychologist by the name of Ingrid Kvamme. She was glad to begin her observations at the appointed time. She said she would be ready to give her assessment in the spring of 2016, after Easter --- I nearly lost consciousness when I

heard this. Eight months of pointless observation in order to determine whether I was a potential danger.

Ingrid spent an hour with me each month during my visits to the child. She talked about unrelated topics --- politics and culture. She told me she sympathetically shared my pain at being separated from my child.

At first Ingrid observed in me a sense of anxious uncertainty, and then decided that I was dangerous to my own child. This was at a time when my son was cutting his first teeth and was grabbing things to bite on; I would bring him fruits, peeled and pitted. But the child quietly put a pit in his mouth. At that moment Ingrid asked me a question about the first lady of my country. This question distracted me, and Ingrid panicked as though the child might die if he swallowed the pit; the child was perfectly all right and had not even understood what was happening. Ingrid stuck her fingers in his mouth to extract the pit. At the hearing she accused me of egocentrism and imposed a severe punishment --- visits of eight hours per year under supervision. Egocentrism is the type of personality of people who find it difficult to accept information from another person if it contradicts their own view of the world. The court expert with a psychology degree did not understand the meaning of her own terms and accused the mother's character as the cause of the separation from her child. Not only was her eight-month observation contradictory --- both of her assessments were mistaken.

The judge insisted that they were guided solely by the interests of the child. But no one checked what had been given to the child in return and what had been taken from him.

Did he receive all the best, as the children's rights advocates had promised?!

But Kristian never gave way before the welfare authorities; he was afraid of accusations of abduction and statements about potential danger. It took five years to prove that I was not dangerous, but the proceedings are not yet complete. My son wants to live with me. We have a wonderful time together. When my son sees his father, he wants to hide, and I can see that he feels uncomfortable in that family.

Among Norwegians there is a saying: 'To shoot the rider and miss the shot is not the same as not killing the rider.' They foresaw the danger, but the danger did not occur, and they blamed her for having prevented it.

The child's father betrayed her and foresaw that the child might swallow the cap from a milk carton --- something that even an adult could hardly have swallowed.

Sabina continued her account: "My son was still breastfeeding; his first teeth had only just come in, so he was biting --- and this cannot be forbidden. If he had been forbidden to do it, he would have had a temperature and it would have been painful. For some reason specialists who have their own children and who work with children do not know the most elementary things. I was permitted to see my child for five hours a week, and then they decided this was too much, and chose to bring in supervisors for eight hours per year. A psychologist with negligible knowledge of psychology concluded that she was acting in the interests of the child.

I lost the case, but I filed an appeal. This gave me more chances for the future.

I wanted to ask why I was made to sign a document on 16 February 2015 without explanation or translation?! They could see my nervous state --- the glass was trembling in my hands, I could barely hold the pen."

"The glass was trembling --- and they still handed you the pen?" --- I couldn't hold back.

"Yes. And no one said a word." Why did these authorities violate their own rules, the rights of mothers, and the principle of the best interests of the child? You say the child is better off, when they were so unjust to his mother. They deprived the baby of sleep, milk, care, and maternal warmth. You impose rules of etiquette on the child that you yourselves do not know and do not follow.

Why do you deceive the child? A child is not a social experiment. There is no need to torment people by trying to make everyone the same as yourself."

After telling her story, Sabina began to weep, and I said to her: "Calm down, everything will be all right. This is difficult, sad, and full of suffering. Much struggle and resistance. Without doubt, you have had to fight for everything... But what is impressive and hopeful is that something may in the end come right, however small.

I believe that in the long run things will be better, and you will be able to manage everything, get it all back, and win. Never give up in this struggle and never let it break you or make you retreat."

I gathered up her handkerchief and wiped her face as I started the car and drove her home.

Sabina invited me in for a cup of tea.

We sat in silence for a while. She held her mug in both hands, as if warming herself. I asked how she had been managing all this time.

"I hold on for him," she said simply. "When I stop understanding why any of this matters, I think of him, and that helps me get up in the morning."

I couldn't find the words. I poured more tea.

One day I said to her: "The divine is everywhere, but not everyone is able to see it. In the sequence of ordinary events and phenomena it distinguishes the manifestations of unique people --- the greatness of living beings.

Every cloud has a silver lining."

Sabina continued her account: "The court experts say that I mean nothing in my son's life, as if I were a distant relative to him. In reality this is not so. My son calls for me to stay with him. He wants both mother and father to be there, together with the whole family. It's just that some people are too cold to listen to a child under six years old --- or maybe under sixteen! There is an enormous misunderstanding of what exactly was not in the child's interests. My son wants me to be there and not leave him. He has been showing this all these years.

My son asked me why I live in Stavanger, and I answered that I find life there interesting. He demanded that his father move to Stavanger. My boy said more

than once that he wants to live in Stavanger with me. His father reacted to this negatively and without joy.

My son asked whether I would live near him. I replied: YES! I said that if his father would allow it, I would live near him and see him every week. Kristian replied that this was for the court to decide, and started the car.

Kristian took my son from me against our will. The lawyers did not help us. I understood that the judge's final decision depends on the assessment of the court-appointed expert, who is usually a psychologist. Even if my case contained many positive facts in the report, the expert's conclusion was unexpected and completely different.

Kristian did not comply with the terms of the court ruling and was obliged to pay fines. He then filed an appeal and blackmailed me without any grounds. He abducted my son for a month, from July to August 2019. When he returned, he said he would not permit me to see my son without supervision. And if I came, he would call the police. He won the appeal in December. When I read his letters, my hair went grey in a single day from horror.

The lawyer opened a case demanding equal visiting rights and parental responsibility, but we lost it, because the psychologist was familiar neither with international culture nor with the language. She was from Karmøy, and I had previously had a similar experience with Ingrid Kvamme. The local authorities are so corrupt." Sabina began to weep. She is terrified of the future. After a brief pause she continued: "This strange Christian family. They forbid the use of many things, and so they only buy what they need themselves, not what my child wants. He therefore has no opportunity to play developmental digital video games suitable for his age. He knows only the basics from kindergarten and school. He has a gluten allergy and can eat less than before. They do not substitute products, because healthy food is more expensive."

I tried to steer the conversation in a different direction. I said: "You know, if you had got to know him properly in advance, things would have been different. The establishment of identity is a complex science. Recognition of identity, protection of dignity, building healthy network systems not based on political or cultural values --- all of this is so important! This network shapes the society in which we all live. We should develop personal identity data. So many people live without an identity or with a stolen one. You can't even imagine. Perhaps your ex-husband is one of those criminals who simply stole your time and is tormenting his own child. You were right to go to court, even if they are a bunch of fools there.

There are many ways to identify a person, but what is actually meant by the concept of 'identity' has not been precisely defined. In general it amounts to some number, a full name, a place and time of birth. After a person's death, if their body becomes difficult to identify, a laboratory examination is conducted, and the person is identified by their biological code. This is a different approach to individual identity, but a more natural one than names and dates. I want to say that every person is unique, but there are also common types of people. And what makes them alike may be hidden deep in the soul and the subconscious.

Personal identity can be determined by the micro-movements of the body and facial expression. In certain states or moods, some people behave in the same way.

Such people are called people of a particular type. This can also be seen in behaviour and body movements. Some have distinctive differences and atypical biorhythms. This side functions on an autonomous system and does not submit to instincts and will --- here the mind is asleep. Few people try to understand the nature of their feelings and the causes of their reflexes, probably because this demands more energy.

Some narcissistic personalities are capable even in critical moments of not losing control of their behaviour; they learn to relax gracefully, to enjoy themselves, and to move gracefully.

Errors of thinking or disorders of the nervous system can be identified by certain signs. Some people talk more than they listen or understand. In this case, more energy goes into talking than into thinking, and fewer reactions occur in the brain.

The speed of processing information and feelings in such people differs.

In some, the visual organ is more developed than the auditory. Such features of brain development also influence the manifestation of personality.

In critical moments the characteristics of the heartbeat change sharply. Reflexes of self-protection, unjustified cowardice, nervousness, and the speed of making important decisions in such people differ from the majority. Such people, even when they are aware of their mistakes, are incapable of changing and repeat them again.

It would be useful to improve methods of establishing identity! The goal is to ensure, monitor, and combat biological and mental illnesses for everyone. A plan of action for uniting people and entering data into the system should include:

Creating and implementing a system of identification and registration of persons, including measures to develop the appropriate software for testing the identification system.

Cooperating with doctors and bioengineers to conclude a contract for the provision of data-entry services into the system. Training and providing the necessary equipment and consumables.

One can believe that the soul is immortal and carries within it information from the past. The soul does not need food or water, but it needs to breathe.

Breathing opens the way to the mysteries of the subconscious mind and the autonomic nervous system. The pulse changes readily with breathing, which means the heart also responds to breathing.

Is it possible to recognise, read, or determine the soul? Is it possible to know what a person breathes, whether they resemble others or possess a special type? For the air is common; all living creatures breathe the same air. I cannot say with certainty that I know the answer. For me, identifying a person by psychological and biological parameters would mean more than a full name and place of birth.

And perhaps this is the only way to recognise the monsters within a human body."

When a predator looks at its prey, it sees not only the light reflected from it but also senses its warmth, its smell, and is capable of reading the personal information contained within it. The light reflected from the prey enters the predator's eye,

passes through the nerve connections to the brain, and sets in motion numerous mechanisms in its body. The pulse changes, and the internal organs release more hormones into the blood. More and more ideas and scattered thoughts arise in the predator's mind, and a state of paranoia compels it to make a certain decision and form a plan. It must not let the prey escape and must attack at the right moment. It must act imperceptibly, approach from behind, staying within the blind spots. Avoiding eye contact can lead to an unexpected reaction, fear, and panic, which will demand immediate action. The closer the predator approaches, the greater its chances.

The attack must be sharp and unexpected enough that the prey has no time to react. In the event of resistance, the conflict may attract the attention of witnesses and other participants and lead to undesirable consequences.

Such caution creates and develops special skills of thinking and the careful selection of prey. The success of a predator's hunt depends on several factors.

After a stunning attack, silence falls. The final breath, the blinking of eyes --- and in eyes full of shock, darkness descends, gloom and liberation from the predator's tenacious grip.

Then it maniacally tears at the flesh, replenishing its exhausted strength, filling itself with the victim's energy, compensating for the missing elements, and seems to plunge into the parallel world from which the prey had come. Now it partially continues its existence inside the predator, sustaining its vital forces.

The mingling of their blood in the future may lead to changes in offspring and the hybridisation of the predator. The predator will become even more dependent on this taste and smell, even at an enormous distance, far beyond the ordinary range. Outwardly --- a predator, but inwardly --- a graveyard of frightened victims, their home and its family.

As a result, bipolarity arises. The imagination and expectations of this person --- happy little animals, gambolling little goats, sunbeams running across a field, sweet dreams every night. But the reality of the outer world is different: everywhere a battlefield, a reminder of the deadly hunt and the endless hunger. Growing greed and this hunger determine which of these worlds is more real.

From time to time, a moment of clarity would come over his consciousness; he would recognise his guilt and regret what had happened.

Sabina told me about her nightmare about a monster, or werewolf, like this:

He wanted to return to where it all began, and change the past. To make a different choice.

The monster saw a dazzling light, and before it stood his mother. Inside her was darkness.

He asks: why are you so dark?

She replies: all our ancestors were dark; we are the embodiment of darkness.

Under the cover of darkness we are protected. We instil fear of the unknown, absorbing the living light. The light cannot be limitless.

He replies: I do not want to live in darkness!

--- Without it you will not survive in a world of dangers and will not live to be reborn.

--- What will happen if I die?

--- Everything will return to its place, and you will have no opportunity to change anything.

--- And what will happen then?

--- The forces of darkness will bow to the light.

--- Why is this confrontation necessary?

--- Nothing should last forever.

--- But I want my dreams to last forever. Seeing the beautiful world of my victims, I feel that I myself am turning into one of them. I want them to stay with me and not dissolve in the mist.

--- Do not worry; they will be with you forever, if you listen to my advice. Life cannot be changed.

--- Changed into what?

--- The balance of light and darkness is the foundation of everything.

--- Who creates the light?

--- The Conqueror of Worlds has gone far in his power and might. He has conquered us and condemned us to life's trials. For death is always perfect, and nothing needs to be changed. We do not need his love, mercy, and forgiveness.

Each lives for themselves. Leave everything as it is.

--- I want to be on the side of peace and radiate different colours. I cannot fight with myself. Inside I feel like a little piglet.

--- The Creator could fashion life from a leaf of a tree and breathe life into the terrible darkness. Now we can conquer the world, but you want to choose a different path. It will bring you shame.

--- The light is stronger than darkness, but why must I serve the goals of others?

I knew neither happiness nor joy in this life. I do not want to be compelled to cause pain to others because of my dependencies. I need to live through this nightmare. To choose a better path and become part of absolute reality, limitless possibilities, and deep feelings.

I want to learn about the world from its very foundations and free myself from the evil dependencies that are destroying the world and the lives of those I love.

Let me plunge into the depths of the sea and be carried by the current into the deep ocean. There I will remain in every drop of water; I will plunge into the microcosms. Moving with the wind through the waves and magnetic fields of this earth. Weaving my net in the whirlpool of events. I could become a magician,

radiate light and see in the dark. I could connect the parallel worlds and build a better future. Nothing should simply disappear!

--- I love my son as much as I love myself. I do not want him to live among monsters. I would give everything and do everything to live with him. Only my parents and family will support me. We all lack time with our precious son," said Sabina.

--- You saw what was hiding behind his mask when it was already too late.

--- This story is a sad love story. My former husband is not at all the person I married. I asked him whether he would eat with me, and he said he had drunk a Fanta and wasn't hungry. I asked where he had eaten, and he attacked me in wild fury, pushed me against the wall, grabbed me by the hands, frightened me, and then said that I was strong. Then I was locked in another room; the baby was not tired by any of this, but I began to worry. Two days later I had an emergency birth --- because of someone's medical error.

--- Oh God, Sabina! Please hold on! Your child needs you; the world needs your wisdom. Your experience must not disappear without trace! How I wish I could help in some way!

She took my hand, pressed it to her cheek, and closed her eyes. We sat like that until she had calmed down.

Already at the door, saying goodbye, she said: "You are the only one I can tell this to. Thank you for listening." And she added, without turning: "Sometimes that matters more than any advice."

The astral body allows one to be reborn in several parallel worlds at once, on different stars of distant galaxies. Through quantum energy we are capable of experiencing several lives simultaneously. Quantum changes in one world lead to changes in many other worlds and disturb the equilibrium of certain natural phenomena. This is precisely why magic and witchcraft were long considered sinful and were forbidden. In my view, the development of science is better than the practice of an unpredictable master. Under the influence of cosmic forces, Sabina became a victim of circumstances. The dark energy of the werewolf touched her life. This is very difficult to prevent. That is precisely why we should study the cosmos and keep the mind open.



Appendices

Collected here are the formulas and tables referred to in the main text of the book --- in the form in which I would like to propose them for further discussion, rather than as definitively proven facts.

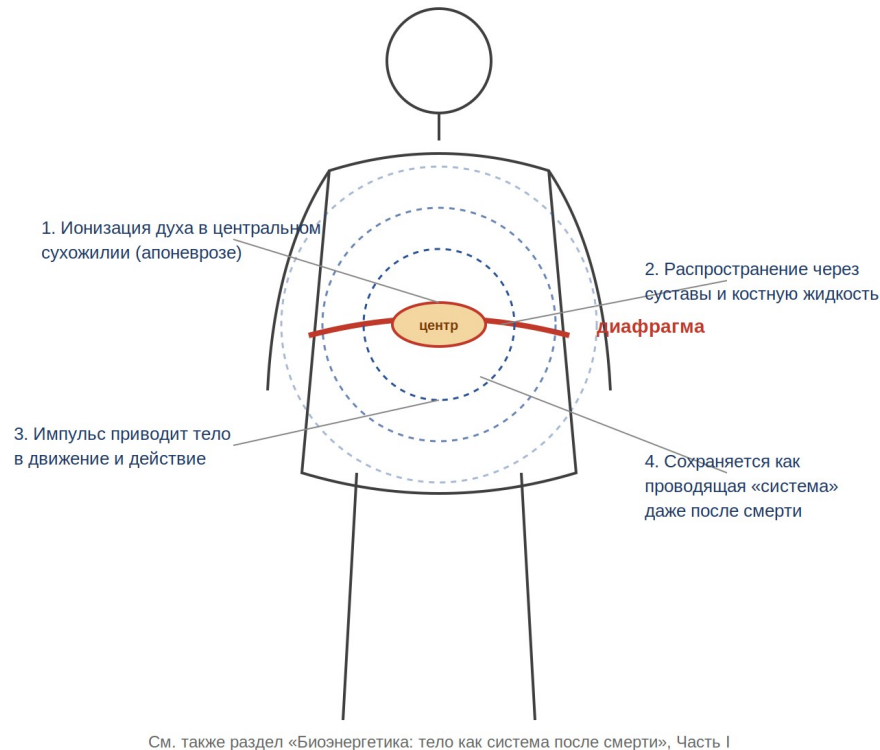
1. On the Question of the 'Formula of the Soul'

In the 'Zombies' chapter (Part I), I suggested that a particular combination of the substances of which the air we breathe is composed --- oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen --- might form the individual characteristics of personality, much as the combination of amino acids forms the characteristics of a species. This is not a chemical formula in the strict sense but rather a schema of the parameters which, in my view, it would be worth taking into account in such an analysis:

Parameter	What it potentially reflects
Ratio of gases on exhalation	the overall energy profile of the personality
Respiratory rate and depth at rest	level of anxiety, tendency to stress
Change in breathing under provocation	tendency towards aggression or avoidance
Electrical conductivity of exhaled air	intensity of the ionic processes discussed in the 'Zombies' chapter

Сухожильный центр диафрагмы как «местонахождение души»

Авторская гипотеза, глава «Зомби» (Часть I) — не анатомический факт



2. The Formula of Power

In the 'Kill or Die' chapter (Part II), the physical measure of power is defined as work multiplied by time:

$$\text{Power} = \text{Work} \times \text{Time}$$

By 'work' is meant here not only physical labour but any purposeful action --- military, economic, diplomatic --- while time is the duration over which that action can be sustained under control. The longer a ruler is able to maintain an action once performed (a conquest, a law, a tax), the greater their power in this understanding.

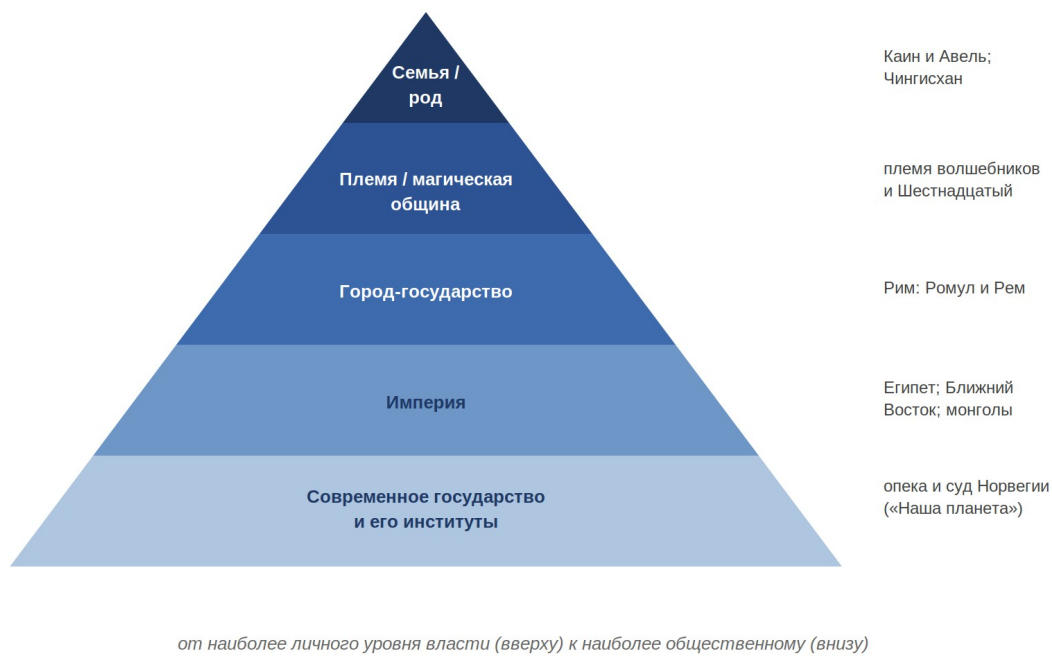
3. The Hierarchy of Power in This Book

Below is a simplified schema of the levels of power encountered in Part II, from the most personal to the most societal, followed by the same hierarchy in the form of a pyramid.

Level	Example from the book
Family / clan	Cain and Abel; Genghis Khan and his half-brother Bekter
Tribe / magical	the Mesopotamian tribe of magicians and the

community	Sixteenth
City-state	Rome: Romulus and Remus
Empire	Ancient Egypt; the Near Eastern empires; the Mongol Empire
Modern state and its institutions	the child welfare and court system of Norway in 'Our Planet'

Иерархия власти, рассмотренная в книге



4. Fear Circuit: Key Structures

Quick reference table for the section "The Neurobiology of Fear: Predator and Prey in Close-Up" (Part II).

Structure / Stage	What happens	Source in the book
Amygdala	triggers the defensive cascade when a threat appears	Fanselow, 1994; Kapp et al., 1992
Ventral central grey matter	responsible for 'freezing' at distance (fear bradycardia)	Fanselow, 1994
Sympathetic nervous system	anxiety stage: vigilance, blood to muscles, pulse quickens	Masterson & Crawford, 1982
Dorsal central grey	active defence in the 'attack	Fanselow, 1994

matter	zone' --- fight or flight	
Nucleus accumbens & medial prefrontal cortex	anticipation of reward in the pursuing predator	Zald, 2003; Schultz, 2000

Afterword to the Second Edition

This second edition ends here --- not because the questions posed at the beginning of the book have found definitive answers. Quite the contrary: having gathered the scattered thoughts of the first edition into three parts, I can see more clearly how much in them remains open. If this book leaves the reader not with a sense of completion but with a desire to reflect on their own body, on their own fear of death, and on the people around them who sometimes wear masks --- it will have served its purpose.